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The Morris Reading-Houses: A Study in Dissent

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College of William & Mary - Arts & Sciences

THE MORRIS READING-HOUSES:

A Study in Dissent.

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By

Robert Leland Bidwell.

1948.

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A NOTE ON FOOTNOTES.

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Dr. Earl Gregg Swem's Virginia Historical Index (Roanoke, 1934) has become such a standard work to any student of Virginia history that it is as a relief to both reader and writer I have adopted his method of citation to avoid the congestion in footnotes invariably caused by frequent quotations from magazine articles. To the list used in the Virginia Historical Index I have added one magazine used extensively, and have dropped those from which I have not quoted. Throughout the paper the following abbreviations are used:

H - William Waller Hening's Statutes at Large being a Collection of all the Laws of Virginia, 1619-1792 (Richmond and Philadelphia, 1809-23), 13 volumes.

J - Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society, published by the Department of History of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., Philadelphia, 1947 being volume 25.

T - Tyler's Quarterly Historical and Genealogical Magazine, published in Richmond by Mrs. Lyon G. Tyler, January 1948 being volume 39, number 3.

V - The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, published by in Richmond by the Virginia Historical Society, 1948 being volume 56.

W(1) - William and Mary College Quarterly Historical Magazine, first series, 1892-1919. Similarly the second series, 1921-1943, is indicated by W(2), and the present series, begun in 1944 is marked W(3), 1948 being volume 5.

In like manner, to avoid the redundant and graceless "known hereafter as...," I have given the full title the first time a source is used and without further notification I have used an identifying short title, unless a restatement of title or date seemed desirable. For example:

Rev. John Gillies' Historical Collections relating to Remarkable Periods of the Success of the Gospel (Kelso, Scotland, 1845) edited by Rev. Horatius Bonar, becomes Gillies' Historical Collections.

APOLOGIA.

* * * *

While political events have had their historians, and political men their biographers, the great struggle for religious liberty which preceded the Bill for Religious Freedom, has never been set forth. It has been but slightly referred to in the record of these very events over which it had a controlling influence. And while it remains unknown, Virginia, both past and present, remains unknown. The power of the religious principle in moulding the civil and political institutions of Virginia, has not been appreciated. The law for religious freedom in the Statute book, cannot be duly estimated, while the history of the men that thought and labored and suffered for the unrestrained liberty we enjoy, remains unwritten.

---William Henry Foote, Sketches of Virginia, (Philadelphia, 1850), I,1.

I.

AN EVENT IN HISTORY.

* * *

The causes were at work for a score of years, out of which rose the "Great Revival," giving existence and form to its glorious and memorable mercies, and to its deplorable and remediless catastrophe. There were circumstances—some obvious, and more unsuspected—creating the necessity for that amazing revolution in the hidden springs of our church's life. Zinzendorf, Wesley, and Whitefield were not the authors of "the manner of the time;" they were but the lightning and the thunder, the rushing wind and the rain-torrents, in which the long-gathering storm breaks forth. God visits the waters, the parching pasture, and the withering field; we gaze on the dividing of the flames of fire, the shaking of the wilderness and the terrific land-flood, as though they had no king over them. In another age, how little could those great evangelists have accomplished! "Thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it."

---Richard Webster,
A History of the Presbyterian Church in America...
(Philadelphia, 1857), 132.

Such a mass of literature has accumulated on the various phases of the religious movement in Colonial America known as the Great Awakening that a mere recapitulation of any event in the revival merits no welcome. Still no comprehensive work has yet appeared which leaves the student with the feeling that the movement has been properly evaluated, either its causes or effects placed in perspective, or the chaff winnowed from the grain of social and intellectual history.

This cannot be done until the local manifestations of the phenomena are minutely examined. The continual dissipation and destruction of records makes this every year more difficult. Even the printing of contemporary documents has not been proof against their extinction.

Fortunately for the study of the revival in Hanover, men concerned in it wrote extensively. Two institutional agencies preserved records of its progress —the church and state. At the very time of its occurrence men were interested in recording it as history, and at intervals since, denominational and secular historians have attempted to reconstruct or reinterpret the movement. But as we become interested in accounts not phrased in terms of "vital piety" and "enthusiastic delusion" we find that the very records we want most are missing. In this particular case, the burning of Richmond in 1865 destroyed the records of Hanover County stored there for safety. Only the title of acts and sketchy newspaper accounts of trials are left of many cases in court records.

Personal notes in letters now gone were recorded by partisan historians by only the "..." of omission.

In a few cases the prominence of a leading figure has attracted a biographer, or the religious signifigance a theologian. For this reason the revival at Northampton, Massachusetts, under Jonathan Edwards has received a disproportionate place in Colonial history. To Virginia's disadvantage, no biography of Samuel Davies has been published, nor has a proper study of his theological writings been produced. The biographers of George Whitefield have not covered the ground carefully.

For these reasons I have attempted to gather existing records on a decade of this local movement, less as a narrative than as a guide to the factors operative in the community and religious atmosphere. Two prominent sectors of the problem cannot be covered here. The first is the problem of economic pressure, on either the groups involved or the individual characteristics produced by such pressure. It is doubtful if sufficient records remain to make such a study. The second problem I am even less qualified to investigate,--that of the psychological traits revealed in such letters and other writings left from the period.

I have attempted to evaluate the bias of writers' conclusions as they appear against the evidence of the mass of material, and the use of primary material fairly and effedtively in secondary articles. A large amount of available material has been overlooked by many writers, either through insufficient search or the unpleasant conclusion forced by the material. The defence of one or another

branch of the Church has led most writers on the subject to choose the part of the story they wish to portray and to gloss over the rest.

Very few of the sources used in this study have not been surveyed or incorporated by other writers on the Great Awakening, or the history of the churches in Virginia. Because of this, and from the nature of the subject itself, no point turns upon the capitalization or punctuation of a source. While I have followed accurately the texts, even to the inclusion of their mistakes and distracting misspelling, and have indicated all questionably deciphered words or clearly understood fragmentary words through the use of brackets, I have felt it unnecessary to include the archaic calligraphy of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Consequently I have lowered all superior letters and have spelled out the ampersands and like symbols which might retard comprehension. Where I have, in a few cases, reproduced the quotation verbatim, et literatim et punctuatim, it is clearly so indicated.

The quotation at the opening of each chapter is essential to the following text, and is not merely an embellishment. It epitomizes the sense as well as introducing the reader a tempo to the following discussion in contemporary or histriographically proper expression.

II.

There occur from time to time in history events and movements which appear on the surface, and from a distance, to be spontaneous. Of such a nature are the scattered religious revivals of the decade from 1730 to 1740 which initiated the movement known

America as the "Great Awakening." Quite apart from the religious significance of this revival, the upheaval caused by emotionalism and increased sectarian activity has a definite place in the history of the period for its effect upon the social life and the intellectual development of the Colonies.

Even at the time this revival occured it was recognized as a definite movement, and one of importance. It was given a name; contemporary writers could put their fingers on dates and geographical spots of its inception; its leaders were recognized and their evaluation has been upheld by history to a surprising extent; and the revival had so spent itself within the lifetime of its participants that they could see it as a whole, and write of it as history. Many of its events were written and printed at the time; and, unlike many historical movements so recognized at a later date, it was led and opposed by capable men, as ready with their pens as with their tongues. They rushed into print as often for controversy as for edification, and those who followed them were zealous in gathering and editing their sermons and writings.

Fortunately for those who would study the events of this period in Colonial history, a second revival followed early in the National period, bringing with its renewed interest in the faith of the fathers a new interest in the great men of their fathers' youth. From the fast-fading memory of the elders, writers of the time of the second revival culled the memoirs and incidents of the "Great Awakening," preserving notes missed by contemporaries or found in documents unknown to their fathers.

In times of religious decline, revivals of the past are of little interest, and books of sermons are little sought after. Documents concerning churches and ministers are discarded, and a low valuation is placed on clerical exploits, movements of religious thought, and the influence of religion on secular affairs. Nor , in the past, has every phase of human life, trite and domestic as well as exceptional and public, been considered a proper field for historians. So until recent years revivals and sermons were left to the writers within and for the clergy, or, at best, to church historians.

In recent years, however, a different approach to history, and to the influence of religion in an intellectual and historical capacity, has brought a flood of books, monographs and articles on this phase of Colonial history. Much remains to be done, much to be redone, and we are learning how much as been lost. It has been a century since the only book devoted solely to the Great Awakening, and to its entirety, has been written. This book is Joseph Tracy's The Great Awakening, A History of the Revival of Religion in the Time of Edwards and Whitefield (Boston, 1842). Many topics have been exhaustively covered in monographs and theses, yet there is no complete history of religion in the Col nial period. (1)

So it remains for some to write the broad and definitive histories, and for others to dig out the incidents and details, and to check the

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(1) Outstanding work in the treatment of sections of the movement has been done in recent years in such books as C, H. Maxson's The Great Awakening in the Middle Colonies (Chicago, 1920), Wesley M. Gewehr's The Great Awakening in Virginia, 1740-1790 (Durham, 1930), and the many books by Dr. William W. Sweet, of Chicago. Although Dr. Sweet's books bear the titles of histories of religion, they are rather histories of churches and denominations and the influence of these ecclesiastical bodies on the American frontier.

accurateness and proof of earlier writers. To this latter group belongs this inquiry into the grass-roots history of a small movement, insignificant beside its renowned parallels under Wesley, Edwards, and Zinzendorf, but of the same movement and leading to the same end. Here must be found the "circumstances—some obvious, and more unsuspected—creating the necessity for that amazing revolution in the hidden springs of our church's life."

Each of these separate contributors to the Great Awakening had something unique in its genesis. In the first stirrings of discontent and the form taken by the dissenting movement centering in Hanover County are such differences and such factors. Perhaps they are less obvious than in most revivals, and in many cases they are lost to record. To single out and delineate these factors is the purpose of this study.

Merely to recount the actions leading to the formation of the first Presbyterian congregation in this section would give this paper little validity outside the session records of that church. But in seeking the cause for dissent in Hanover County in the 1730's we are examining a condition widespread in the Colonies, and recurring throughout all the history of the Church. And in the reasons for the dissenting movement here are the reasons for the Great Awakening everywhere. To understand the movement we must work upstream from the great flood of the revival that carried all of the Colonies, Britain, and most of Europe before it to new expressions of religious feeling, and which generated bitter controversy over a period of many years. The various headwaters must eventually be reached, much alike in appearance, and all contributing to the effect of the flood. Here

was a definite spot, and here was a short period of time,—yet, unlike most of the other local beginnings, here was no definite outstanding personality to lead the way. The key to the dissenting movement in Hanover is the key to the reason for the whole Awakening. Nor do I think that key will be found in a single thesis, or in history at all; for if the key is not theological, as religion would have us believe, then it rests, in all probability, in the field of the science of psychology. But its manifestations are history, and there are records and the lives of men to prove it; and in the history of thought, clear lines of ideas, expressed in this case in writings, oratory, and action well past the period of the Revolution, can be traced to validate a study of an event that is of interest to more than the session of a church, or the adherents of a system of theology.

III.

There are a number of reasons why the group in Hanover County should be singled out for study. They would merit study if for no other reason than their success in establishing a number of flourishing churches which disrupted the sway of the Established Church in that section,—and for the influence those churches had on the future of the Presbyterian Church and the struggle for religious freedom in Virginia. For that reson, most authors writing on the Great Awakening in America, and all authors writing on the rise of the Presbyterian Church in the Colonies, mention and to some extent appraise the importance of the Hanover churches.

The rise of dissent in Hanover is marked by unique features, which, neither adding to or detracting from the importance of the

movement, single it out from the origins of other Presbyterian churches in Virginia in the same two decades. Each factor contributing to the dissent from the Established Church, and causing it to become finally a Presbyterian congregation, should be examined to determine its influence and relative importance on the direction of the movement.

The first factor which strikes one in reading the simple accounts of the genesis of this group is the part played by a few books in the hands of earnest readers. The complete absence of a dominating personality in those earlier years only accents the predominant position of the books. What was in those particular books to inspire men, and to force them to action? Certainly other men read religious books in Virginia, yet without leaving the Established Church.

In similar movements of the early years of the Awakening, both in Virginia and elsewhere, there was in almost every case a strongly inspired and gifted man to lead the movement. And if there was not a single person, there was at least the heritage of a similar religious experience in the lives of the parents or grandparents of the congregation (as in the case of Presbyterianism in the Valley of Virginia, in their Scottish and Ulster background). Of the men to whom the movement may be attributed, —and has been attributed by admirers of each, none came early enough to be justly credited with its origin. George Whitefield stimulated the thinking and action of the Dissenters in Hanover, yet on his first trip to Williamsburg none of them heard him preach. While it is true that it was a book of his sermons which played a prominent part in the formation of the reading sessions, yet

it was the book and not the personal influence of the man which accomplished the result. To William Robinson the Presbyterian Church was indebted for the acquisition of the congregation, and the group was indebted to him for their discipline and soundness at a time they might have faltered. But the congregation existed as a separate organization before he made his first missionary trip to Virginia. Without the ministry of Samuel Davies Hanover never would have become a name to be honored and respected throughout the Presbyterian Church in America. Yet for a decade, perhaps, before the young minister came South to visit a congregation he did not wish to accept, the church had maintained its zeal and identity. If the name of any one man could be singled out in Hanover as the founder, it would be that of Samuel Morris. But neither the attachment of his name to the reading houses, nor the prominent place he holds in the narratives in church histories is sufficient to establish leadership above that of the others in the group of men who first left St. Paul's Parish and found the answer to their religious seeking in books and the preaching of itinerant ministers.

If there was nothing exceptionally immoral, or unorthodox, or personally antagonizing in the ministry of Reverend Patrick Henry (1) in St. Paul's Parish, perhaps in the dullness, or conformity to the standards of the Church in his day, and in Virginia, or the cumulative effect of the state of religion in the colony exhibit some reason for the dissatisfaction of his parishioners. Here again is perhaps no personal antecedent, but a local situation which was the epitome of a

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(1) Throughout this paper, the name Patrick Henry is applied only to the rector of St. Paul's Parish. In the slight reference to the patriot, his nephew, the younger man is specifically so designated.

condition giving rise to a definite reaction, such as might have been found in a hundred cases in Europe and the Colonies in this period of religious ferment.

The Great Awakening had a number of local beginnings which merged into a sweeping revival, no other local manifestation rising from such a set of factors. For this reason Hanover stands apart from its sister movements; for this reason these earlier years of the Hanover church have been insufficiently studied, as a clue to the springs at the headwaters of this Awakening, and other religious revivals.

II.

THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH.

* * *

Alas! 'Tis too evident that some, who seem in an ecstacy of detestation against itinerary preaching, do give greater evidence of a party spirit than we whom they accuse of it. For how zealous are they in their attempts to reclaim persons that have joined us?... Many can witness, they were never so much hated and ridiculed for drinking, swearing and other vicious extravagances, if they went to church, as they are for turning Presbyterians. ...They are told since they joined with us, they are in danger of perishing, tho' they were manifestly reformed in their lives; but while they continued in the church, tho' they were less moral they were told no such thing. ...Satires, etc. are published in the Gazette, to alarm the world of these dangerous animals. They are presented, indicted, fined; and all are armed against them, as if they were like to conflagrate the Colony, and consume Focos and Aras!

---Samuel Davies, quoted in "Samuel Davies, Colonial Revivalist and Champion of Religious Toleration," a typed PhD. thesis (University of Chicago, 1942) by George H. Bost, 70.

It is impossible to consider the state of religion in the eighteenth century, particularly the first half —in Virginia, in the other Colonies, or at home in Britain— without regretting its poverty of merit. Even the most passionate defenders of the Established Church, or of the conservative element in the dissenting sects, deprecate the immorality, coldness, lethargy in things spiritual, and ignorance among both the clergy and laity. In many cases the clergy could not call their charges to greater spirituality because they themselves were remiss in their ministry, or, worse still, flagrantly conspicuous for their immoral behavior.(1)

The successful ministries and pious lives of the rectors of the Established Church in Virginia who rose above the mediocrity and spiritual ineptness of the greater number stand out with exceptional brilliance, the comparison enhancing intrinsic worth. The letter of recommendation given by the vestry of St. Stephen's upon the removal of Rev. Hugh Jones from that parish in 1726 discloses a ministry of this type:

> ...whilst he was our minister, [he] behaved himself so well as to merit and obtain the best of characters. For he not only instructed us in powerful doctrine, and elevated our devotion by his fervent prayers, and was most diligent in the discharge of the duties of his sacred function, so as to give general satisfaction in all respects, but also gave us an extraordinary example in his sober life and edifying conversation. And we furthermore attest that

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(1) A fair statement of the stand taken by the partisans of the Established Church is found in G. MacLaren Brydon's "The Virginia Clergy," The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, XXXII, 212: "The whole period in England was marked by formalism and chilling of spiritual life, and Virginia suffered from the same

> he and his family, for their handsome, candid and familiar behaviour, and peaceable disposition, and just dealings, received the love, friendship, and respect of all the neighbourhood. (1)

The early ministry of James Blair, Bartholomew Yates, Anthony Gavin, James Craig, and James Maury recall the tradition of Alexander Whitaker and forecast the devoted ministry of Devereux Jarratt. (2) Had the majority of the rectors been of their stamp in all probability there would have been no need for an "awakening" in Hanover, and a separation from the Church would have been even less probable.

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condition." This view is eminently above that of Philip A. Bruce in his History of Virginia (Chicago and New York, 1924) I, 285: "The character of the clergy did not sink below the standard of conscientiousness observed in the same class in England, and as a rule they were graduates of English Universities and of excellent social connections in their native country." To me, that is an inadequate criterion which no degree of accurateness of historical fact can redeem. It does not indicate the spiritual poverty of the clergy in England, and somehow introduces a note of social approval for a more valid spiritual appraisal. No doubt the majority of the clergy who served a devoted ministry in quietness were not heard from in the reports to England.

(1) William B. Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit (New York, 1859), V, 11.

(2) There is no intention in this paper to cast discredit on the Establishment or its ministers, nor have I relied on the reports of its detractors. Even a cursory reading of the Fulham Transcripts, the Dawson Papers, the Virginia Miscellaneous Papers (all in the Library of Congress), or William Stevens Perry's Historical Collections Relating to the American Colonial Church (Hartford, 1870), will show a similar contemporary appraisal of the religious state of Virginia, and that from within the Church. Of course, the Presbyterians judged the Establishment harshly, and the Dissenters in Hanover spoke of it as uncharitably. This was not unilateral; the Bishop of Oxford spoke truly when he wrote George Whitefield: "...and all sects of Christians are too apt to think hardly of those who are not of their own church, and especially of those who leave it." (Fulham Transcripts) I feel that I am on theologically sound ground in considering New Testament standards a criterion preferable to those of the eighteenth or twentieth centuries, or the conditions in England. The story is retold, less accurately but with pains-taking sincerity, in Bishop William Meade's Old Churches, Ministers and Families of Virginia (Philadelphia, 1857).

It was with less charity than candor that an unknown writer in Williamsburg or Yorktown wrote of another: "...he will not want admirers in this depraved age of Virginia wherein all manner of vice seems to reign with impunity which is sufficiently evincst [?] by the notorious lives of the clergy as well as laity." (1) Bishop William Meade went directly to the point in his blunt statement:

> Such being the corrupt state of the Church in Virginia, it is not wonderful that here, as in England, dissatisfaction should take place, and dissent begin. The preaching and zeal of Mr. Whitefield, who visited Virginia about this time, contrasted with the sermons and lives of the clergy generally, contributed no doubt to increase dissatisfaction. The pious Mr. Davies, afterward President of Princeton College, made the first serious inroad upon the unity of the church. (2)

The tendency to speak of the low state of religion in Virginia in the first half of the eighteenth century should not be taken to imply a depraved state among the people of all classes and parishes. Many godly ministers not only preached effectively the Gospel entrusted to them, but also lived upright lives as an example to their congregations. There is no reason to doubt William Byrd's

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(1) This letter in the photostat MSS of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, in the Library of Congress, is neither signed nor addressed, but placement suggests 1721 and internal evidence Yorktown or Williamsburg.

(2) Meade, Old Churches, I, 15. It has been fashionable to apologize for Bishop Meade's viewpoint, to explain his evangelical attitude as an unfortunate accident with mitigating circumstances requiring explanation. This stand seems to have been augmented in recent years by both a renewed interest in the Colonial history of the Established Church and internal church problems over the same questions faced in Bishop Meade's day. He was not expressing a necessarily Puritanical bias in treating the spiritual condition with scant sympathy, as a study of contemporary accounts, particularly the Fulham and Lambeth Transcripts, will show. Defenders of the Established Church who lean over backward to excuse its ministers and the vitality of the period cannot be defended on the grounds of the difficulty of access to these accounts, as Perry's Collections contains material enough if no other is consulted.

sincerity when he records in his diary: "I said my prayers devoutly, having read a sermon in Dr. Tillotson." (1) The New-Lights might have scrupled at the acceptance of everything in Byrd's conduct, but they could not but have approved these passages: "I wrote a letter to England, notwithstanding it was Sunday." (2); and "I denied my man G-r-l to go to a horserace because there was nothing but swearing and drinking there." (3)

William Byrd also gives us a tantalizing glimpse into an area seldom mentioned in this period,—and one significant in appraising the religious life of his own class. "In the evening we talked about religion and my wife and her sister had a fierce dispute about the infallibility of the Bible." (4) The same dissatisfaction which drove Morris and his friends to seek a more satisfying religious life, drove the more skeptical critics of the Church to Deism and Free-thought. In 1733 Walter Jones, of Copley Parish, Westmoreland County, wrote the Bishop of London: "Woolston's works begin to peep in this dark corner of the world, but do believe that in a very short time the encouragers and pursuers of his books will be found out to their great shame and reproach."(5)

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(1) The Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover 1709-1712, edited by Louis B. Wright and Marion Tinling,(Richmond, 1941), 4. I feel justified in using these quotations from Byrd's diary, even though they fall many years earlier than the Hanover revival not only because he was a contemporary and writes of St. Paul's and contingent parishes, but because the seeds of the revival were laid over a period of years.

(2) Secret Diary of William Byrd, 55.

(3) Secret Diary of William Byrd, 75.

(4) Secret Diary of William Byrd, 29.

(5) Fulham Transcripts, letter dated 27 March 1733.

More serious to the religious life of the Colony was the charge made by William Robinson, of King William County, in a letter to the Bishop: "But I assure your Lordship, 'tis common talk that Spencer the Deist is recommended to be a parson." (1) If true, it would not be the first time such a thing had been tried, for James Blair had written the Bishop of London thirteen years before that Colonel Nicholas Smyth was "a great admirer of Mr. Woolston. There are very few here tainted that way." But Nicholas and his friends had sent a schoolteacher, named Mead, to England clandestinely for orders, and their proposed parson had skipped out on them with the money they had collected for his trip. (2)

If the Commissary thought there were few freethinkers in the Colony, the Governor differed in opinion. That same year, 1735, Governor Gooch wrote the Bishop: "But my Lord 'tis a melancholy truth, the Church and Clergy have many enemies in this country. Freethinkers multiply very fast having an eminent layman for their leader, and the current runs in some places almost without opposition. (3)

II.

Particularly in sections of southern and western Virginia was the Colony undersupplied with churches and ministers. While Virginia was never as ill-equipped as North Carolina, in that respect, there

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(1) Fulham Transcripts, letter dated 27 July 17[illegible].

(2) Perry, Collections, 358, letter dated 24 March 1734/5.

(3) "The Virginia Clergy," 32 V 332, letter dated 8 July 1735. This attitude continued among many of the educated in Virginia. A reflection may be seen in a letter from Richard Bland to Thomas Adams, 1 August 1771, regarding a previous letter: "If you think the language will bear printing, I give you leave to make that part of it publick, for I am mighty desirous the Clergy scheme for an American Bishop should be made as publick as possible to stir up an opposition to it from the Dissenters, who will be terribly scourged by the Ecclesiastical Floggers, as the act of Toleration is not in force in this country." 5W (1) 156.

were similarities in the conditions. When Governor Gabriel Johnston opened the General Assembly of the latter Colony, on 6 February 1739, he summed up the religious needs of the people in this manner:

> The establishment of the public worship of Almighty God, as it is the greatest foundation of the happiness of society, and without which you cannot expect his protection, deserves your earliest care. That in such a wide extended province as this, inhabited be British subjects, by persons professing themselves Christians, there should be but two places where divine service is regularly performed, is really scandalous: it is a reproach peculiar to this part of His Majesty's dominions, which you ought to remove without loss of time. (1)

Even where the Virginia government had set up parishes, and intended sending ministers, along the frontier there were vast areas with no place of worship within scores of miles. The frontier parishes were too large to be properly supervised, and the condition of religious instruction and ministration was more gratifying on the books in Williamsburg than to the inhabitants of the back country.

Many of the missionaries sent by the evangelical denominations of the Middle Colonies were on their way to answer the pleas of frontiersmen of North Carolina for preachers when they passed down the Valley of Virginia, and certainly this was true of the Presbyterian missionaries. William Robinson was leaving the Colony for North Carolina when overtaken by the delegation from Hanover with their request that he visit them.

Certain practices of the Established Church in Virginia differing from the Church of England grew out of this problem of

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(1) Virginia Gazette, 30 March 1739.

undersupplied parishes. As early as 1632 an act had been passed which presaged the difficulty which was to face the Church when a Commissary would be appointed to act in the place of the Bishop of London. The law was "An act that the Mynister appoynt Deacons in remoate places to read common prayer. [...deacons where havinge taken orders can be found...]." (1) The fruit of such a practice was to be seen in several instances in the years of the Great Awakening when "remoate places" found leadership in lay readers.

The experience of Rev. James Craig, upon becoming minister of newly erected Cumberland Parish in Lunenburg County, may be taken as typical of the prospect facing the Established Church in frontier communities. He found the people ignorant both of religion and even of their hornbooks. Those who had any "sense of religion" were badly divided into Church of England, Dissenter and Antipaedobaptists. The distance from churches, lack of ministers, lack of books and the immorality of their former rectors all contributed to the poor state of religion. Asking for books against the Antipaedobaptists, he wrote the Commissary:

> And sorry I am to say, that if the clergy in the Establishment had acquitted themselves, as they ought to have done, we should have had no occasion at this time to use this or any such expedients to curb or expell Enthusiasm and superstitution.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Halifax and the Upper Parish in Brunswick would be much better without ministers, than to be constrained to maintain two brutes in that character. The most abandoned wretch despises a man, who, instead of being an example to those under his care, exhibits the most infamous pattern of drukeness, debauchery, litigiousness [?], and profaneness. People will rather put themselves under the guidance and

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(1) 1 H 208.

direction of the most ignorant Enthusiast who lives a moral life, of whatever persuasion he be, than under one of such a character. This is exactly the case in Halifax, and if it is not so in Brunswick, it is because nobody has attempted any such thing there. (1)

III.

The Dissenters attending the Morris Reading-houses who lived in New Kent County may have had a longer period of discontent behind them than those of Hanover. The original parish of New Kent County was St. Peter's, the east side of which was cut off in 1684/5 to form Blissland Parish. In 1696 Rev. Nicholas Moreau wrote from this new parish: "As to me, my Lord, I have got into the very worst parish of Virginia, and most troublesome nevertheless." In explaining Quaker meetings there in the past two years, he continues: "If ministers were as they ought to be, I dare say there would be no Quakers or Dissenters among them." (2)

If Blissland was "the very worst parish of Virginia," its parent parish, St. Peter's, was not much better. Rev. John Lang, rector of St. Peter's, wrote the Bishop of London in 1726: "I observe the people are very zealous for our Holy Church, as it is established in England, so that (except some few inconsiderable Quakers) there are scarce any Dissenters from our communion, and yet at the same time supinely ignorant in the very principles of religion, and very dabauched in morals." (3)

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(1) James Craig to Thomas Dawson, 8 September 1759, Dawson MSS. The rector gives also an account of the rise of the Antipaedobaptists in Halifax County under the leadership of William Murphy and Samuel Harris.

(2) Meade, Old Churches, I, 384.

(3) Perry, Collections, I, 346. This lead Bishop Meade to conclude: It is not wonderful that this should be among the first parts of our State in which dissent began, as we are informed was the case under Samuel Davies, some twenty or thirty years after the date of Mr. Lang's letter." Old Churches, I, 385.

John Lang's successor in St. Peter's Parish was David Mossom. The opening of the young minister's forty-year pastorate was auspicious. Born in Newburyport, Massachusetts, David Mossom was the first native American presbyter in the Church of England. (1) Yet little is remembered of his ministry (apart from performing the marriage ceremony of George Washington and Mrs. Custis) except the dryness of his sermons. (2)

To the north of St. Paul's Parish, Hanover, across the Pamunkey River, lay St. Margaret's Parish, King William County. This parish was formed in 1720 from St. John's Parish. When Caroline County was erected in 1728 St. Margaret's was extended to include the new county. In 1744 a new parish was formed in King William County of the part of St. Margaret's in that county, and upper St. John's, and named St. David's. Part of Caroline County lay in Drysdale Parish (erected in upper King and Queen County from St. Stephen's in 1723) after the county was augmented in 1742. (3)

While dryness marked the pastorate of Mossom, as accounts record it, that of Alexander White in St. David's Parish was marked by contentiousness. In the decade in which the Dissenters in this section decided in favor of the Presbyterian Church, the misunderstanding and bickering among White, Patrick Henry and John Brunskill added nothing to the spiritual enrichment of their parishes. (4) In the

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(1) Meade, Old Churches, I, 386.

(2) This is noted in the chapter on preaching, page .

(3) George Carrington Mason, "The Colonial Churches of King and Queen and King William Counties, Virginia," 23 W(2) 441.

(4) This quarrel, as taken from the Dawson MSS, is on page

life of the Colony he is most noted for having sued, with John Camm and others, in the famous trials over the Two Penny Act of 1763. (1) Alexander White had some ideas more commendable to us today than to his parishioners. When he attempted to baptise some Negro children, as instructed by the Commissary, he was prevented by a "bully." As he felt this baptism to be a matter of conscience with him, he wrote the Commissary for advice in prosecuting the man.

> There is one great impediment attending the instruction of Negroes in the Christian faith, and that is the aversion that most masters of slaves have to this pious charitable design; imagining, or at least pretending, that their being christened (especially among white children) will make them impudent, mutinous, and rebellious; thinking themselves as good as white people. Which objection, tho' it has no strength to it, yet 'tis more [than] I can do to remove it with some obstinate people. (2)

Next to the Rev. Patrick Henry, the man most closely connected with the Dissent centered in Hanover was Rev. John Brunskill, Sr., of

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(1) 19 W(1) 21.

(2) White to [William Dawson], 4 July 1748, Dawson MSS. He was ordained in 1745 to preach in Virginia and is not mentioned in any other parish. He received the King's Bounty for Virginia (hereafter following the name of the minister, "KB [date]") 12 June 1745,—which does not mean he actually came to Virginia at that time.

On the question of instructing the Negroes in Christianity, the leaders of the Established Church and Samuel Davies and his fellow-laborers were in total agreement. William Dawson [?] wrote Dr. Bearcroft in 1744: "At the next meeting of the General Assembly I design, God willing, to recommend and enforce from the pulpit the instruction of the Negroes in the Christian faith, and the day following, to put into the hands of the several members the Lord Bishop of London's letter on that subject, which, I hope, will effectually supply the defects of my own performance." (Dawson MSS) Dawson had recently received 115 copies of the Bishop's letter from England. For Davies', Todd's and Wright's work among the Negroes, see the letters in the Appendix of Gillies' Historical Collection, 502, 503, 506, 521, and The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A. M., Nehemiah Curnock, ed., (New York, n.d.), IV, 125, 149, and 194.

St. Margaret's Parish, Caroline County. Confusion in understanding the parishes held by various ministers in this period is caused by the presence of three John Brunskills in the Church in the Colony at the same time. The John Brunskill of Henry's and Davies' letters came to Virginia in 1716 (KB 6 May 1715), and must have been sent to Wilmington Parish in James City and Charles City Counties soon after his arrival. (1) After his eight-year pastorate there Wilmington Parish was divided and new parishes formed, leaving Brunskill without a cure. He felt that the parish had been divided unjustly, unwisely, and without the wish of the people. But the fact that had invested heavily in his property there gave ardor to his pleas for its re-establishment. (2) While he believed that the parish had been divided at the instigation of an influential layman, there was also friction between Brunskill and Commissary Blair over the division. Brunskill wrote the Bishop of London through friends over Blair's head ("this I had sent myself immediately to the Bishop, but for fear of its being intercepted here.") Blair showed his feelings on the subject in a letter to the Bishop concerning Brunskill: "Mr. Brunskill too is taken care of, and has got a very good sweet scented parish. I hope your Lp. will not be very troubled with any more of his complaints." (3)

The "good sweet scented parish" given Brunskill must have been

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(1) Perry, Collections, I, 277.

(2) John Brunskill to the Bishop of London, 27 June 1724, Fulham Transcripts. He was still trying to resurrect the parish six years later, as is shown in a second letter in this collection, dated 29 June 1730.

(3) Blair to the Bishop of London, 25 May 1725, Fulham Transcripts; also quoted in 19 W(2) 454.

St. Margaret's in Caroline County. The new pastor became embroiled in quarrels with his parishioners and with his neighboring clergymen. (1) His losses in property when Wilmington Parish was dissolved did not keep him from buying new land in King William County and settling down for a full twenty years or longer. (2)

Despite the quarrelsome nature of this John Brunskill, he was the best man of the three. His eldest son, John Brunskill, Junior (KB 11 October 1752), rector of Hamilton Parish, Prince William County, was accused in 1757 by his vestry of intemperance, and other irregularities, and was dismissed by Governor Dinwiddie. (3) Of the third John Brunskill nothing need be said except that he came from England during Davies' ministry (in 1758) to Raleigh Parish, Amelia County, and was still there in 1776 when he was deserted by his congregation as a Tory.

Among the people of the parishes throughout the Colony, particularly in neighboring parishes, the tales of immorality in the lives of the clergy furnished a topic of never-failing interest. Nor was this confined to the gossips. To serious churchmen and

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(1) In 1738 Brunskill's parishioners presented a petition to the Council protesting his refusal to preach at a chapel of ease. 14 W(1) 115. His quarrels with Henry and White are noted elsewhere.

(2) The Virginia Council Journal shows that Brunskill owned four hundred acres in King William County in 1728. 33 V 22.

(3) G. MacLaren Brydon, 33 V 43fn; Meade, Old Churches, I, 167; and R. S. Thomas, The Loyalty of the Clergy of the Church of England in Virginia to the Colony in 1776 and Their Conduct (Richmond, 1907), 4: "There were counties, like Prince William, where the Rev. John Brunskill, Jr., in 1757, not only disgraced his Church, but disgraced humanity; and like Amelia, where the Rev. John Brunskill in 1776 was only a little better." Thomas' treatment of his subject is both prejudiced and injudicious.

their equally devout parishioners, either laxity or overt violation of the moral code was a matter for prayer and sorrow. Not so with the enemies of religion or of the Established Church. To those who cared nothing about religion, and on whom the parish levies were burdensome, there was the vulgar pleasure of running down the clergy; to the Quakers and Dissenters these not infrequent incidents were added proof of the decay of the Established Church and of its incapacity to lead them spiritually.

Both before and during the dissenting movement in Hanover parishioners (particularly on the frontier) were vexed and shocked with the conduct of clergymen not truly dedicated to their mission. Of course, this was in no way confined to the Church of England, but in Virginia there were so few others at this time that the phenomena became identified with the Established Church. Perhaps the worst case, in its possible relation to the inhabitants of Hanover County, was the dismissal and exile of James Keith, of Scotland, from neighboring Henrico Parish. Keith was not only charged with fornication, but his character was so unsatisfactory that friends of the girl refused to let her wed him to mitigate the censure. (1) While the Governor's letter to the Bishop of London shows no harsh censure, he does recognize the effect on the people. Writing of the arrival of Anthony Gavin (KB 17 June 1735), in September of 1735, Gooch said: "I intend to send him to the parish Mr. Keith left, a very good one, where, I make no doubt, his conduct will make amends to the people for the failings of that unhappy gentleman." (2)

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(1) James Blair to the Bishop of London, 10 January 1734/5, Fulham Transcripts. James Keith (KB 4 March 1728/9) came to Henrico Parish prior to 1730.

(2) 32 V 333.

Whether or not Mr. Gavin in his year as rector of Henrico Parish succeeded in making amends we do not know. Yet that worthy gentleman fell into another fault which from time to time aroused the people against their ministers. In 1736 Gavin became rector of St. James' Parish, Goochland, remaining until the parish was split into Albemarle, St. James Northam (north of the James River) and St. James Southam. Although the vestry book of St. James Northam stated in 1744 that each parish might chose a rector, Gavin insisted on retaining his cure in St. James Northam, knowing that he was not desired. As in the case of Alexander White, of St. David's, Gavin's parishioners probably failed to appreciate his frank, outspoken attitude against slavery. In a letter to the Bishop of London in 1738 he described the condition in his parish: "I struggle with many Quakers, who are coutenanced by high-minded men, but I wrestle with wickedness in high places, and the Lord gives me utterance to speak boldly as I ought to speak." (1)

When, in 1748 in the midst of the Hanover revival, William Kay came from Lunenburg Parish, Richmond County, into the area of Presbyterian activity in southern Virginia, he was accused of lies, swearing , drunkeness and other irregularities. Although the vestrymen of Lunenburg wrote that this was untrue, and that they had not given him a "character" to get rid of him, the notion must have been prevalent among the people. (2)

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(1) Quoted in Meade, Old Churches, I, 456.

(2) Various letters in 1748 in the Fulham Transcripts. In one, quoted in Perry's Collections I, 392, Kay defends himself to the Bishop against charges, and complains that his wife left him with a baby after cohabiting with "vestrymen" she suffered to seduce her. There must have been those among his new parishioners who enjoyed the false with the true, in both his legal battles and personal affairs.

In Hanover County itself, in neighboring St. Martin's Parish, the first minister was an unfortunate choice, to the people's detriment. Rev. William Swift (KB to Bermude 8 May 1722) had arrived in Virginia under a cloud and was sent by the Governor to St. Martin's, despite the Governor's assurance to the Bishop that he was "...confident he will be very easie and faithfully discharge his duty in the care of Souls." (1) After Swift's death, in 1734, the Governor was to write again: "Mr. Dunbar is the very bad Man, now Mr. Swift is gone." (2)

Gone Mr. Swift was, but not forgotten. The conditions indicated by these examples from the parishes close to Hanover County continued through the period of Davies' ministry, and until the Revolution swept away the power of the Establishment. Transcripts from the records in Fulham Palace tell the depressing tale of minister after minister being evicted for immorality:—John Ramsay of St. Anne, Albemarle, asked by the vestry to leave for negligence and drunkeness in 1767, Rev. Dade of Fairfax Parish dismissed the following year for adultry, Patrick Lunan of Upper Parish, Nansemond, charged with evil living.

It must be admitted of the Great Awakening, that even after years of its tenure in Virginia, there was no marked improvement throughout the Colony as a whole. Perhaps the antagonism of the conflict between the two groups excluded any influence by the one

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(1) 32 V 222, 223.

(2) 32 V 332.

upon the other, or the effects were confined to too small, and possibly a socially restricted, group.

In 1766 Davies' pupil, James Waddell, then minister in Lancaster County, wrote George Whitefield:

> We have but melancholy prospects of religion among us; and when it will seem proper to God to change the scene, is a dark, disconsolate uncertainty. The love of pleasure, and a proneness to every vice are so remarkable in the people of this colony, that it would require your address, in every minister almost, to procure an outward reformation; and what must it require in two, or three, to produce the same effect, against the prevailing torrent of impiety, rendered more rapid, and bold, by the addition received from,I believe, by far the greatest part of the clergy? (1)

In a second letter he shows how little conditions have changed in the pre-war years, as he asks Whitefield for a preacher with funds ("for a script and staff would not do here") to itinerate in Virginia:

> He would no doubt be opposed by the unhappy clergy, who oppose the peculiar doctrines of the New Testament almost in every sermon viz justification by faith, and the influence of the Holy Spirit; but such opposition would rather animate, than discourage.

This attitude was not shared by the clergy of the Establishment, yet in their letters are heard echoes of the plaintive voice of men doing what they think to be right and unable to see a reason for the lack of response in others. In 1732 William Dawson wrote the Bishop of London: "It is however, my Lord, [a] matter of

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(1) James Waddell to George Whitefield, 5 August 1766. This letter and the one following are in the collection of Whitefield letters in the Library of Congress.

concern as well as surprize, not to be dissembled, that infidelity and profaneness are not yet totally subdued by the joint endeavours of a clergy famed for its piety and learning.

. . . . . .

"I can with pleasure assure your Lordship that religion here is more prosperous and flourishing, notwithstanding our common inability to display her charms." (1)

Recognizing the moral shortcomings of Virginians, the Rev. Alexander Forbes in 1724 described conditions aginst which the Church made little progress in following years:

> As to their moral defects in vertue and piety they are generally much the same as among the rest of mankind. Drunkeness is a most common sin in which multitudes seem to be hardened thro' the decietfullness thereof. Rash swearing is too common, many thro' folly and ignorance glorying in that shame. Great numbers, I think, are more ashamed of chastity and modesty, than of impudicity and ribaldry. (2)

Added to the inability of the ministry of the Church to effect a change, was a certain amount of blindness on the part, certainly of some, of the clergy. With a totally unjustified smugness, a rector wrote Thomas Dawson in 1750: "...even under the disadvantages it [the Church of England] labours under at present to the northward, [it] gains ground apace upon the Presbyterians, and other sectaries the spawn of them; with whose pretended sanctity, and nonsense, the people in general are most heartily sick and nauseated." (3)

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(1) Fulham Transcripts.

(2) This report, dated 21 July 1724, found in the Fulham Transcripts, is printed in Perry's Collections, 323 - 334. It contains the most scathing indictment of the clergy a fellow-clergyman could make.

(3) H. Addison to Thomas Dawson, 10 December 1750. Virginia Religious Papers, Library of Congress. This appears to be the letter of a rector, perhaps in Maryland, but no less applicable for that reason [see Perry, Collections, I, 535].

IV.

When the Established Church was faced with the problem of Dissent it could have met it with indifference, expecting the enthusiasm to wear out and the movement with it, or it could meet the challenge with action. The reaction in different parts of the Colony, and at different times, depended largely on the character of the churchmen in the community. In many places lassitude prevailed, and other communities were spurred to periodic action.

When Edmund Gibson became Bishop of London, in 1720, he sent instructions to the Colonies containing this section:

> III. The less assistance you have from the Spiritual Power to restrain vice and immorality, the greater need there is to engage and secure the assistance of the Temporal Power in that pious and important work. ...(1)

Even where the churchmen were charitable enough to include the local dissenting movement under neither "vice" nor "immorality" the principle enunciated by the bishop was applicable. If it cannot be historically demonstrated that the devoted ministers of certain parishes had the aid of Spiritual Power in directing the lives of their flock, it can be shown that in parishes under an immoral clergyman, or a succession of them, Dissent —in the form of Presbyterians, Quakers, or freethinkers, it mattered not— sprang up in fertile ground. And in many cases the Church found it necessary to call in the Temporal Power to uphold its position.

If we put the most charitable construction on the acts of the clergy of the Establishment, we might take the statement of David Currie

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(1) Fulham Transcripts.

and John Leland, rectors in Lancaster County, to Commissary Dawson as typical of the opinion held by the clergy concerning the Dissenters:

> Could we persuade ourselves that nothing but the pure glory of God, the advancement of true religion was intended by these gentlemen, or was the number of Dissenters in these parts sufficient to support such an undertaking we should not be alarmed; but when they have no other means to compass their designs, than that of drawing off the people from their Established Church, who can forebear using their best endeavours to put a stop to such proceedings? When the people's affections are alienated from their teachers, they are likely to give but little heed to any advices they may offer, then how soon may they be brought to the greatest contempt both for their persons and doctrines? Which tho' but little thought of at present, may in time tend to give a mortal wound to ...[the Church of England]; and tho' it be supported by nothing according to them but the sorry sanctions of a civil establishment, yet we hope is so acceptable ...[to God that we shall never depart from, or change, it]. (1)

While the Rev. Patrick Henry probably headed the clerical opposition to the movement, here he had the aid of his neighboring rectors who quarreled with him over other matters. (2) He had from the very beginning opposed the Dissenters in his parish, but when Samuel Davies arrived in 1747 the contest became almost a personal one, as it was between Davies and Peyton Randolph. In 1747 Henry wrote the Commissary: "I'm sorry my letter, when laid before the Council, had not the desired effect. I am ready to

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(1) David Currie and John Leland to Commissary Dawson, 12 April 1758, Dawson MSS. Meade, Old Churches, I, 123, states that Currie was rector of Christ Church, Lancaster from 1743 to 1792, and John Leland was rector of Wycomico in 1758 (I, 132). The role played by Leland and the Rev. Mr. Menzies in opposing the Dissenters in Northern Neck, as told by James Gordon in his diary (see bibliographical notes for source), is so inconsistent with the first sentence quoted above that the whole letter appears open to question of motive.

(2) The petition to the House of Burgesses in 1751 protesting the action of the Dissenters around Hanover is signed by Henry, Mossom, Brunskill, John Robertson and Robert Barrett (Perry, Collections, I, 381). On other occasions Henry had the support of John Camm and William Stith.

prove the truth of every fact set forth therein, and which my brethern, if they had sign'd the letter, must have believed upon my testimony,—there being but few things in it that they themselves would otherwise know." (1)

The attitude that seems to have been taken by most of the clergy and many eminent laymen was voiced by Benjamin Waller, clerk of the General Court, in the early stages of the Hanover revival:

> Calm reason gentle persuasion and good example are the ways most agreable to the Gospel to reclaim a thinking [sic, --man?] but where too great a delusion prevails and obstinacy presides, often milder methods have been in vain attempted, a little rigor should be used, not so much to reclaim a perverse Enthusiastic (for there will be little hopes of that when reason and the Scripture cannot convince, and he makes obstinacy a point of conscience) as to deter other unthinking mortals, whose strongest passion is often fear. As these simple wretches, who vainly imagine they in their folly have formed a new light brighter than that given by the author of light, do not as I hear preach against the fundamentals of religion, but only persuade people from frequenting the Established Church, by despising and reviling its service, I think they come under these laws. (2)

Waller was not a blind adherent to his cause, missing altogether the source of trouble, for he admitted that if the clergy showed the anxiety over the spiritual condition of their flock they showed over worldly matters much of the trouble could be averted. He continued: "...the immoral and scandalous lives some of them lead gives the enemy too much occasion of reproach; and weak minds often judge of

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(1) Henry to William Dawson, 29 April 1747, Dawson MSS.

(2) This letter by Benjamin Waller is found in the Dawson MSS. It is badly mutilated and the address is missing. But fragmentary evidence indicates it was a letter to William Dawson, dated 30 January 1744, and it seems to refer directly to the Hanover group.

a sect of religion by the outward shew of its teachers and professors, and prefer superficial and hypocritical appearances to solid principles. If the heads of the churches would join pious examples to gentle and charitable persuasions..." the poor deluded people might be more easily brought to see their error than by severe measures they would call persecution for conscience sake. (1) Waller then listed for the Commissary the laws which seemed to him to apply in the case upon which he had been consulted, and advised the Commissary to have them presented for not attending church, and by the powers he possessed in a spiritual court by virtue of his authority as Commissary.

In no case does the action of the Church appear as an official crusade against the Dissenters. Neither James Blair nor the Dawson brothers offered leadership in action to bring the full penalty of the law to bear on them. On the contrary, while these men were classified by the Presbyterians as just and magnanimous men, Davies said of the King's Attorney General in Virginia, upon his arrival in England while Davies was there in 1754: "I find Peyton Randolph, Esq., my old adversary, is now in London; and will no doubt oppose whatever is done in favour of the dissenters in Hanover." (2)

Peyton Randolph was ably seconded by other prominent laymen, some of them on the Council,--almost certainly including Thomas Lee--, as well as the competent Waller and vindictive Edwin Conway, of Lancaster County.

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(1) Benjamin Waller to [William Dawson], Dawson MSS, 30 January 1744.

(2) Davies' diary, 4 March 1754, quoted in Foote, Sketches, I, 256.

V.

The Bishop of London (in whose see Virginia lay), from his vantage point at the center of the Empire, rightly took a different view of the Hanover movement from that taken by Patrick Henry. That he should have given it the attention he did, when its comparative importance is considered, commends his attention to the remote corners of his diocese. His reaction would have surprised the disaffected worshippers in Hanover, for, amusing as it appears to Presbyterians today, he persisted in considering the Hanover revival as a Methodist movement.(1) When Patrick Henry saw his congregation falling away in large numbers the movement loomed great and called for action by himself and the Church in the whole Colony. The Bishop saw the same thing happening every day, both in England and abroad. Undoubtedly to him it was almost entirely the work of George Whitefield, to be classified and treated with other Whitefield incidents. If he took dognizance of the spontaneous character of the movement before Whitefield's arrival in Hanover, and if he realized it might lead to a separation from the Church, he could (and did) cite the actions of the Moravians under Zinzendorf.

The familiar means of combatting Whitefield in England presented themselves to the Bishop as the proper means of meeting the Hanovarian movement, and he wrote his Commissary in Virginia:

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(1) Nor was he alone in this misapprehension. A letter from a Mr. T. Wilson, Walbrook, London, to Commissary Dawson, 29 September 1747, in the Virginia Miscellaneous Religious Papers states: "Your worthy Governor's zeal in relation to the Methodists is very much commended by several of our most eminent men in Church and State, to whom I have communicated the printed papers."

> Here has been lately published a small preamble entitled Observations upon the conduct and behaviour of the Methodists; which the Bishops are dispersing in their Dioceses, as an antidote against the spreading of that Sect. Mr. Whitfield has declared his resolution to answer it; and as he is shortly to come to the Plantation, he will, no doubt, bring over with him a number of those Answers. Forty copies of the Observations are ordered to be sent to you, and the like number to the other Commassaries, in whose jurisdiction these people have been already very troublesome, and probably will be so again. When the Observations, which are a charge of numerous irregularities against him and his followers, shall be compared with the Answers, every one will be his own judge, whether or no, or to what degree he has taken [of ?] the charge. (1)

The degree to which the religious condition in Virginia was affected by the character of the Bishop's Commissary cannot be determined. Although the relation of James Blair, and to a decidedly smaller degree, that of William and Thomas Dawson, has been examined by more than one writer, it has usually been an incidental or oblique examination. The controversial character of the strong-minded Blair has been discussed or considered by every writer on the Established Church in the Colony and its clergy, on the Colonial government, or on the College of William and Mary, but for all the research and interpretation he does not emerge as a clearly defined character.

James Blair, son of Rev. Robert Blair, was educated at Marischall College, Aberdeen, and received the degree of Master of Arts at Edinburgh University in 1673 at the age of seventeen. (2)

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(1) Edmund [Gibson] Bishop of London to William Dawson, no date, Dawson MSS.

(2) The article "James Blair, Commissary," Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church, XIV (June, 1945), 86-118, by G. MacLaren Brydon is one of the latest studies on Blair, and I have considered it more accurate, in both facts and interpretations, than the earlier accounts.

Although brought up in a Presbyterian atmosphere, Blair preferred the Church of England to that of Scotland, and rather than conform to the usages of the national church he went to England with a small group of clergymen who believed as he did. There, because of his circumstances (or his Scottish ordination) he was denied a satisfactory ministry, but it is possible that at that time he laid the basis for his future political power. In 1685 he was sent to America by Henry Compton, Bishop of London.

A full discussion of the life of Blair and his work in Virginia would be out of place here. In a few respects, though, he had a direct bearing on the Hanover revival. He had been for a period rector at Varina, in Henrico County, where his influence was probably spiritually uplifting. In his younger days Blair was evangelistic and probably had more of the puritan in his nature and preaching than the majority of his fellow-clergymen. An example of this, together with a comment on his ability as an impartial observer, is recorded by Charles Campbell, quoting Blair on swearing:

> I know of no vice that brings more scandal to our Church of England. The church may be in danger from many enemies, but perhaps she is not so much in danger from any as from the great number of profane persons that pretend to be of her, enough to make all serious people afraid of our society, and to bring down the judgments of God upon us: "by reason of swearing the land mourneth." But be not deceived: our church has no principles that lead to swearing more than the Dissenters; but whatever church is uppermost, there are always a great many who, having no religion at all, crowd into it, and bring it into disgrace and disreputation. (1)

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(1) Charles Campbell, History of Virginia (Richmond, 1847), 435.

When Francis Nicholson became Lieutenant-Governor of Virginia in 1689 Bishop Compton established the office of Commissary in the Colony, appointing Blair, then rector at Jamestown, to the office. In training, ambition and ability Blair fitted the requirements of the office, but it is difficult to say that he made a successful Commissary. One of the privileges of the office was a seat on the Council and an undetermined amount of legal authority. As Blair was also ambitious for the college he established in 1693, he so thoroughly mixed the affairs of church, state, and education in his conduct that it is difficult to separate his motives for any specific action. To his admirable characteristics must be added with less admiration a high temper, thorough Scotch obstinacy, a certain amount of pride, and an ambition that could, and did, crush opposition when the Commissary felt that he was in the right—a not infrequent occurrence.

Functioning as Commissary, Blair was often more practical than strict in his governance of the clergy. During his first thirty-five years he suspended only two ministers, explaining to the Rev. Mr. Alexander Forbes: "Because of the want of clergymen to fill vacancies, I choose rather to lean to the gentle than the severe side. (1) This desire on the part of the Commissary to keep the parishes supplied with ministers despite their quality had an immediate effect on the subject of this paper. It may also have led to some misunderstanding of

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(1) This letter, dated 20 June 1723, is quoted from Perry's Collections, I, 251, in Daniel Esten Motley's "Life of Commissary James Blair...," Johns Hopkins University Studies, XIX-10 (Baltimore, 1901), 20. This account is the best known and fullest published story of Blair's life, though its early date excludes many of the facts included in the writings of G. MacLaren Brydon.

Blair's ability. An unknown writer charged: "It is said the Commissary gives himself little trouble, either in reforming the lives of the clergy by precept or example or any other ecclesiastical affairs." (1)

Many of Blair's troubles as Commissary arose from special problems within the Church, and in the Church's relation to the Colonial government, which are outside the scope of this study, but which cannot be ignored as explaining many actions and attitudes often ascribed to religious intolerance by partisan writers. The first of these was the number and character of Scotch ministers in Virginia. The Bishop of London explained to Dr. Philip Doddridge:

> Of those who are sent from hence, a great part are the Scotch or Irish, who can get no employment at home, and enter into the service more out of necessity than choice. Some others are willing to go abroad to retrieve either lost fortune or lost character. (2)

Some of the Scotch ministers, like Blair, were fine men and excellent pastors, but were prevented by their ordination from serving in England. Both Blair's championing of his compatriots, and his chariness in speaking of his own ordination served to incite the envy and prejudice of his personal enemies, and those who disliked the Scotch clergymen. It would be of more than idle interest to know to what extent this affected both Blair's attitude toward the Presbyterians, and the attitude of both clergy and laity in office during the period of the Awakening. There is no recorded meeting of Blair and Makemie, although they probably did meet. While his experience with Presbyterianism in his early ministry was not such that he

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(1) SPG Photostats, LC. See footnote (1) page .

(2) Foote, Sketches, I, 148.

would favor them, still he might not have held the opinion of the native rectors that Presbyterian congregations were merely fanatic gatherings of sporadic nature, outside the churchly ken. (1)

The second problem facing the Established Church at this time was the importance of the vestry, and its specific relationship to both the clergy, as representatives of the Church, and the Governor, acting as the representative of the King in his office as head of the Church. The power of the vestry was very real, built up over the span of a century into something quite different from its position in England. The Hanover revival came in the heat of contention within the Church and Colonial government over the power of the vestry, finding burgesses and political leaders divided where as good churchmen they would have otherwise been united in their opposition to Dissent. The mid-century revival added a new complication to the problem, and Thomas Dawson, when Commissary, was forced to admit to the Bishop of London: "Tho' by our laws, none shall be admitted to be of the Vestry, who do not subscribe to be conformable to the doctrine and discipline of the

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(1) While it has no direct bearing on the Hanover movement, the explanation of Blair's position as given by Dr. Brydon is of importance to the condition in general of the Church under Blair's tenure as Commissary. "It must be clearly understood that although in his later years James Blair declared, and truly, that he had received episcopal oridantion, this does not mean that he was ordained as a minister of an Episcopal Church distinct and separate from the (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland as an organization different from the Established Church of Scotland. ...But the actual fact was that he was a minister of the Church of Scotland even though he had been ordained by a bishop. This fact will perhaps explain Commissary Blair's unwillingness to give too much detail about his ordination to the convention of 1717, when Governor Spotswood was thirsting for his blood." G. MacLaren Brydon, "James Blair, Commissary," 89, 90.

Church of England; yet many Dissenters are Vestry-men, wherein I humbly request the favour of your Lordship's advice." (1)

The problem of the position of the vestries continued throughout the years of the Establishment, but the personal problems caused by Blair's background and powerful position in the Colony ended with his death. None of the Commissaries following Blair had more than a fraction of his power. The fact that the office never carried with it the weight or spiritual control it should have possessed was probably due to the precedents set by Blair. (2)

Several years before Blair's death, in a letter dated 21 May 1739, Governor Gooch recommended William Dawson to succeed Blair as Commassary, and predicted his election as President of William and Mary. (3) Of this professor at William and Mary, Gooch had previously written: "He is a very good man, sober, modest, and truly religious." (4)

But the virtuous William Dawson left an undistinguished record as Commissary. Coming into the office in 1743, the year the first Presbyterian missionary preached in Hanover, and serving until his death in 1752, after Davies was well established, Dawson's term in office is marked only by obscurity. Upon his death, William Dawson was followed in his office as Commissary by his brother Thomas, rector

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(1) Fulham Transcripts, letter dated 16 August 1751. There can be little doubt of the Bishop's attitude, but, as more than one Governor could testify, forcing compliance from the vestries was another matter.

(2) This failure on Blair's part is explored, but possibly with injusice to Blair, by Dr. Brydon. Motley's conclusion is much more favorable to Blair, but he may have been less concerned with the welfare of the Church.

(3) 33 V 57.

(4) 32 V 233, letter dated 23 July 1730.

of Bruton Parish, but who was elected with less unanimity than his amiable brother. Apparently Davies found both of the Dawsons fair, even friendly, men. It was Thomas Dawson with whom he had most of his dealings. The Virginia Gazette for 31 October 1755 notes the election of Dawson to secceed William Stith as president of William and Mary, thus uniting again the two offices which had been separated since his brother's death. It can be assumed without hazarding improbability that the letters from these two men in their office as Commissary to the Bishop of London reflected a more stern attitude toward the young Presbyterian minister than they evinced in personal contact with the talented and attractive visitor from Hanover. (1)

It was probably this very amiability which caused the office of Commissary to drop even deeper into obscurity during the tenure of Thomas Dawson. When Governor Dinwiddie tried, and dismissed, John Brunskill of Prince William from his cure, Dawson doubted his power to take such action, yet could do nothing about it. Dawson's successor, William Robinson, thought, and stated, that Thomas Dawson had a secret consciousness of his unworthiness for the office he held. (2) He followed a well-loved brother, and the cares of a family with at least one black sheep bore heavily upon him. This, together with his duties of a double office which taxed even Blair's ability, drove the Commissary to drink to excess. In a day when hard drinking, and occassionally drunken clergymen, passed without comment, the extent of Dawson's

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(1) In the Lenox Library there is a 1756 edition of the laws of the College of William and Mary inscribed: "The gift of President William Dawson to Rev. Samuel Davies." (6 W(1) 176) Many references in Davies' writings indicate a friendly personal relationship with the Dawsons, Stith, and others.

(2) William Robinson to the Bishop of _____[London], Perry's Collections, I, 463ff and other letters.

surcease in drink caused him to be arraigned by the Board of Visitors of the College. The amiability, and pathetic plight, of Dawson preserved for him his office, even in the face of his disgrace, but it added nothing to the effectiveness of his office as Commissary.

It is impossible to excuse the Commassaries entirely from blame for the condition of the clergy in the first half of the eighteenth century, but the facts do not justify critizing them too harshly. Too many personal and political problems not connected with the office of Commissary entered into their failure to make the office all it might have been to unduly emphasize that position either in the effectiveness of the message of the Established Church, or in the overt opposition of the Establishment toward the Dissenters.

From the conditions sketched in this chapter, and the attitude of the Church toward Dissenters as they knew it, came some of the thoughts of a certain group of worshippers in St. Paul's Parish, Hanover County, when they deliberately decided to cease attending their parish church for spiritual guidance.

III.

PATTERNS OF DISSENT.

* * *

And therefore, gentlemen, since the workers of a deceitful work, blaspheming our sacraments, and reviling our excellent liturgy, are said to draw disciples after them, and we know not whereunto this separation may grow, but may easily foretel into what a distracted condition by long forbearance, this colony will be reduced, we are called upon by the rights of society, and what, I am persuaded will be with you as prevailing an inducement, by the principles of Christianity, to put an immediate stop to the devices and intrigues of these associated scismatics, who having, no doubt, assumed to themselves the apostacy of our weak brethren, we may be assured that there is not any thing so absurd but what they will assert and accommodate to their favourite theme, railing against our religious establishment; for which in any other country, the British dominions only excepted, they would be very severely handled.

——Governor Gooch, charging the jury in Williamsburg, 25 April 1745, from the Virginia Gazette as given by Foote in Sketches, I, 136.

...[being] assured your Excellency will continue to us those liberties we have enjoyed, particularly the free exercise of our religion, according to our consciences, and the practice of the Established Church of Scotland: and humbly hoping, that, whereas we have in times past lain under some restraints, from which our brethren in England, under the same religious Establishment, are happily exempted, your Excellency will grant us all the liberties and immunities of a full Toleration, according to the laws of England, and particularly according to an Act of Parliament commonly called the Act of Toleration.

——Memorial to the Earl of Loudoun upon his arrival in New York, dated 10 August 1756, from the Presbytery of Hanover, MSS Minute Book of Hanover Presbytery.

I.

Dissatisfaction with the Established Church, and dissention to one of the sects of the day, or to free thought or deism, was not a new thing in Virginia. Seventeenth century experience with Puritans of the English type had left an unpleasant impression with both the people and the government. Nor was there a more cordial feeling toward the Catholics and Quakers. The few successful experiments in dissent were little known among the people, and then they were usually associated with non-English groups.

From the earliest days there had been a "low church" tradition within the Established Church which at times approached open Puritanism. At times the conflict between the Established Church and the Dissenters was heightened by the feeling of the more strictly ritualistic English ministers against their brethren of the extremely "low church" group. This conflict has a legitimate place in this study, not only because the Presbyterians in eastern Virginia were the eighteenth century heirs and remnants of this mother country struggle, but because the memory of it strengthened the ministers of the Established Church in their opposition to Presbyterianism. (1)

The evangelical heritage runs straight through the history of the Colony, at times broad and at times narrow, from Sir Thomas Dale, Alexander Whitaker, and Patrick Copeland to the contest between the English and Scotch clergy during the time James Blair was Commissary. When Governor Berkeley's chaplain, Rev. Thomas Harrison, fled the Colony he

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(1) As late as 1750 Commissary William Dawson received a letter from England in which the writer [Thomas Sherlock, Bishop of London?] agrees with Dawson that he would not ordain those trained as Presbyterians in Scotland and Ireland except "...I am afraid you would soon find a scarcety of clergymen to supply the churches." Dated 25 December 1750, Dawson MSS.

said the Puritan revival of 1643 had left Virginia with a thousand Puritans. But persecution and a cooling of the evangelical fervor of Commonwealth days reduced the number to a handful by 1680. (1)

A living historian of the Episcopal Church in Virginia has found in the evangelical heritage of the Established Church in the Colony a very logical, but certainly not the only, reason for the lack of Presbyterian activity in Virginia in the latter part of the seventeenth, and opening years of the eighteenth, century:

> Perhaps one may find in the Calvinism of the Established Church in Virginia the reason why no strongly sustained effort seems to have been made during the first century and a quarter to organize the Presbyterian Church among the many Scottish emigrants who came into the colony.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> The Scottish Presbyterians who came to Virginia in its first century were members of the Established Church in their own land and they never looked upon themselves as dissenters. They felt at home in the Calvinistic atmosphere of the Established Church of Virginia and saw no compelling reason to organize themselves under the handicaps of a dissenting body. It was only after the beginning of the great revival in 1740 and the coming of the great numbers of Scotch-Irish into the Shenandoah Valley that the Presbyterian Church as an organized body began to grow strong in the older part of the colony east of the Blue Ridge Mountains. (2)

In Norfolk County, near the Elizabeth River were four preaching stations supplied by a minister named Porter. Nothing is known of Porter except that he was a survivor of the Puritan ministers in the Colony, and that he was a resident minister of non-Anglican

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(1) Among other accounts, this is noted in Edward Mack's Our Presbyterian Heritage in Eastern Virginia (Richmond, 1924; from the Union Seminary Review), 5. On the whole this article is too severe on the Established Church, and the author's interest has led him to slight inaccuricies.

(2) G. MacLaren Brydon, "The Huguenots of Manakin Town and Their Times," 42 V 330 - 332.

worshippers. Porter died in 1683, a year before Francis Makemie arrived to minister to the congregation for about a year. (1)

This is the only Presbyterian congregation which can be traced directly to the Puritan tradition. There are glimpses in records at scattered places during their period that indicate there were non-conformists, or Presbyterians, or other Dissenters of the evangelical school who retained their individualistic religious belief and customs. The most that can be said of these non-conformists in relation to the Great Awakening is that they may have formed the nucleus of dissenting congregations, or have left an attitude in their neighborhoods of discontent with the practices and doctrine of the Established Church.

The coming of Francis Makemie, father of Presbyterianism (as we know it) in America, is said to be the result of a letter written by Judge William Stevens, of Maryland, to the Irish Presbytery of Leggan, asking for ministers for America. (2) The young Scotch-Irish Presbyterian minister came to Barbadoes, and to Snowhill, Maryland, early in the 1680's. On the Eastern Shore he married the daughter of a wealthy merchant of Accomac County and spent the remainder of his life in this pastorate. As early as 1690 he is mentioned in the court records of Accomac County, and on 15 October 1699 he applied for, and was granted by the court of that county, "the first certificate of qualification under the Toleration Act, known to be on

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(1) W. H. T. Squires, The Rise of the Presbyterian Church in Tidewater Virginia (Norfolk, n.d.), 2.

(2) Ye Kingdome of Accawmacke or the Eastern Shore of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century (Richmond, 1911), by Jennings Cropper Wise, 281ff.

record." (1) He was successful both as a minister and as a merchant, and left in his will among other property "my house and lott at the new towne in Princess Anne county, on the Eastern Branch of Elizabeth River, as also my lott and house or frame of house in the new towne on Wormlye's creek, called Urbana, as also my lot Joyning to the new meeting House Lott, in Pocomoke town." (2)

The varied activities of Francis Makemie would have made him outstanding in any period of the Colony's history, and in versatility he and Samuel Davies were quite similar. Makemie is supposed to be the author of A Plain and Friendly Perswasive to the Inhabitants of Virginia and Maryland for Promoting Towns and Cohabitation (London, 1705). His licensing and plea for toleration foreshadows Davies' own struggle. In his missionary journeys and the establishment of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, the first Presbyterian court in America, he laid the foundation for the final establishment of that denomination in Virginia. (3)

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(1) This license is recorded in L. P. Bowen's The Days of Makemie (Philadelphia, c1885), 309, and other places. Rev. Bowen spent seven years of investigation in producing this semi-fictional account which was published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication. Although he drew on both Samuel Miller's Life of the Reverend John Rodgers (New York, 1813), and Foote's Sketches, he produced much that is of value from the records of Eastern Shore courts and other sources. Of a later date, but adding little to our knowledge are Wise's The Early History of the Eastern Shore of Virginia, quoted above, and Susie M. Ames' Studies of The Virginia Eastern Shore in the Seventeenth Century (Richmond, 1940). A less satisfactory biography is I Marshall Page's The Life Story of Reverend Francis Makemie (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1938). Foote devotes two chapters in his first volume of Sketches, 40-84, to Makemie and his fight for religious freedom. Miller, in the account noted above, accepts as fact Makemie's appearance before the Governor and Council of Virginia, while Foote says, "We have...only strong conjectural evidence, besides tradition, of his being called before the legal tribunals of Virginia." Sketches, I,48.

(2) Foote, Sketches, I, 45.

(3) Makemie himself is supposed to be the author of A Narrative of a New and Unusual American Imprisonment of Two Presbyterian Ministers: and

The historian Beverley wrote, in 1705, of the Dissenters, noting Makemie's congregations: "They have no more than five conventicles amongst them, namely, three small meetings of Quakers, and two of Presbyterians. 'Tis observed, that those counties where the Presbyterian meetings are, produce very mean tobacco, and for that reason can't get an orthodox minister to stay amongst them; but whenever they could the people very orderly went to church." (1) After Makemie's death one of Beverley's meetings disappeared, for the Presbytery of Philadelphia wrote the Presbytery of Dublin in 1710: "In all Virginia there is but one small congregation, at Elizabeth River, and some few families favoring our way in Rappahannock and York." (2)

This congregation on the Elizabeth River was the remnant of Porter's congregation. Makemie had visited them (by accident, being blown in by a storm while on a trip southward), and ministered to them. He later provided them with a minister, a Mr. Josiah Mackie, who ministered to the congregation from about 1692 until his death, about 1716. (3)

Prosecution of Mr. Francis Makemie One of Them, For Preaching One Sermon At The City of New York (Boston, 1707), the story of his trial before Lord Cornbury, with which Davies was probably familiar. Two articles by Joseph Brown Turner in the Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society point up the work of Makemie. In "Church Records in the Presbytery of New Castle, VII, 391, he makes a good case for the establishment of the church at Onancock, Virginia, in 1684. In "Some Recently Discovered Makemie Letters," VII, 231-233, he calls attention to two letters discovered by Lyon G. Tyler at Tappahannock. Dated 9 September 1705 (from Williamsburg) and 4 July 1706 (from "James River") they show Makemie in the unusual function of attempting to preserve an absent Man's inheritance for him,—also noted in a letter from Robert Beverley to this man, dated 12 September 1708.

(1) Robert Beverley, The History and Present State of Virginia (London, 1705), 27.

(2) Quoted in Bowen, The Days of Makemie, from Records of the Presbyterian Church, 16.

(3) Squires, The Rise of the Presbyterian Church..., 2, describing Mackie as a "rich old bachelor." The following certificate is recorded: "These are

From the death of Josiah Mackie until 1730 the records of the activity of Presbyterian ministers or the worship of Scotch and Scotch-Irish members of that denomination are too sketchy to form any idea of its prevalence in the Colony. By 1730 even the knowledge of those congregations, and the possible preaching of Makemie in Urbanna, had died in Virginia. No reference is made by Peyton Randolph or Governor Gooch to Makemie's license to preach under the Act of Toleration, and it is certain that the people of Hanover knew nothing of those dissenting congregations.

II.

Scattered throughout the Colony were settlers from Ulster and from Scotland, and in practically every town there were Scotch merchants. Although brought up in the Established (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland, most of them conformed quietly, and probably willingly, to the Established Church of Virginia. From the records we gain no impression of them separate from that of their sober, law-abiding, church-attending neighbors. In later years it was to be these people who established Presbyterian churches in the towns of Tidewater Virginia. But at the time the men of Hanover broke away from the Established Church they received no help or encouragement from the Scots. During the years of Davies' ministry a number of petitions in different sections were presented to the courts to be allowed to erect meeting-houses, and in most cases the group was composed of, or let by, Scots.

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to certifie his Majties Justices of the peace for Princess Anne county that instead of a house at Hanry Holmes, last yeare nominated but never made use of, there is a house appointed as a place of meeting for Religious Worship upon the Land belonging to Mr Jacob Johnson at Wolves neck in Little Creek precincts, and likewise another place appointed for the same purpose and use of Religious Worship upon the lands belonging to Mr. Thomas Scott in Eastern branch, which therefore I the subscriber desire may be Recorded as given under my hand this 9th May, 1700. J. Mackie Pr'sented and publiquely read

In Southside Virginia, except on Elizabeth River, there was practically no Presbyterian activity prior to Davies' ministry in Hanover. From Isle of Wight a rector wrote in 1724: "The Anabaptists and Quakers are always very busie in these remote parts among the inhabitants distracting and poisoning their minds with various doctrines, and undermineing the Church." (1)

In Chesterfield County, just up the river from Isle of Wight, Presbyterian activity in the 1750's was clearly led by Scots, and easily may be attributed in part to the success of Samuel Davies, who often preached in the county. In 1755 the December court of Chesterfield County received this petition:

> On the petition of Dudley Brooke and others of the Presbyterian denomination, that they intend to make use of a place of public worship on the land of Andrew Ammonet in this county, and praying that their said petition be registered, ordered that the same be recorded, and thereupon, the same Dudley Brooke, Wm. Lacy, and Jacob Trahne, subscribed to the said petition, took the usual oaths, repeated and subscribed the tests. (2)

The following year the Chesterfield congregation applied for a supply to the Presbytery of Hanover, telling "...of their earnest desire to hear the Gospel from some of our members: the Presbytery conclude to consider them as vacant congregations, to which they will appoint supplies, as far as possible." (3)

Of course, Presbytery's considering them vacant congregations did

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in open Court held 9th May 1700, and ordered to be Recorded. Test: PA. ANGUS, Cl. Cur." Edward W. James, "Will of Josias Mackie," 7 V 362.

(1) Alexander Forbes to Bishop of London, 21 July 1724, Fulham Transcripts.

(2) Quoted 8 W(1) 128-129.

(3) MSS Minutes of Hanover Presbytery, Union Theological Seminary, Richmond. In this vicinity, Petersburg asked Presbytery for a minister in 1757, and Davies preached to the Dissenters there.

not close the matter of the Chesterfield churches, for two years later, in 1758, the rector of the Established Church in Chesterfield wrote the Commissary:

> I beg leave, Sir, now I am writing to you, to put in mind of an affair, which I could only hint to you, when I was at town. That, if any Dissenters should appear in behalf of an unlicensed meeting house, which has been lately built in a corner of my parish, you will take care to oppose them. It was chiefly promoted by some Scotch merchants and others in Petersburgh of another county and parish. It meets with no encouragement from the gentlemen or generality of the people of my parish, except on [e wrongheaded?] colonel, and a very few others. But if factious and restless people may build an house, when and where they please, without leave or licence; the peace and security of the Established Church will be precarious. This method of pro [ce] eding must appear to be audacious, irregular and illegal, and inconsistent with any lawful toleration, and will always I hope be opposed. Therefore I hope you will take care to disappoint them if they should apply for a preposterous license now... . (1)

The rise of Presbyterianism in Chesterfield stands, then, as an addition, and apart from the Hanover account. More closely akin to the Hanover movement in its origin, and connected with it after 1750 by the ministry of Davies, Todd and Waddell, was the beginning of the Presbyterian churches in the Northern Neck.

Here again it was the Scots who took the lead. They faced the opposition of both the Established Church and of wealthy planters who ridiculed the New Lights. Their difficulty in obtaining a license for their meeting-house, of fines for non-attendance at church, and the other obstacles to religious freedom was the same story as that of their brethren to the south

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(1) George Trask to Thomas Dawson, 9 December 1758, Dawson MSS.

> In the year 1730, in the Northern Neck between the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers there lived one John Organ, a pious schoolmaster from Scotland. He found nothing congenial to his taste in the stagnant services of the Establishment, and gradually withdrawing from the church, he collected around him a few neighbours, to whom he read books of devotion. Their numbers gradually increased so much, that they sought a regular preacher. The Synod of Philadelphia, to whom they applied, sent them a minister named Anderson, who organized a church that was alive early in the present century. (1)

There seem to have been Presbyterians in Northern Neck from the time of Makemie until Davies' arrival, but the records of the church concerning them are very confusing, and open to differences of interpretation. James Anderson, who was sent by the Presbytery to Northern Neck had entered the Colonies in 1710 through the Rappahannock, but went north the following year. From the appeals made to the Synod of Philadelphia, and the ministers delegated to preach in Virginia between 1719 and 1738, there may have been sporadic religious activity in this section, if "Potomoke in Virginia" can be considered in Northern Neck. (2)

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(1) Robert R. Howison, A History of Virginia (Richmond, 1848), Howison's account is based on Miller's John Rodgers, 28, 29, which is also quoted by Foote, Sketches, I, 355. Miller continues: "A very small number of Presbyterians from Scotland, and a still smaller number of Dissenters from South Britain, were thinly scattered through the Colony; but they were so few and so destitute of religious zeal, that no ecclesiastical organization different from that of the Establishment seems to have been thought of (except on a small scale on the Eastern Shore...) until between the years 1730 and 1743... ." 29.

(2) G. MacLaren Brydon ably supports this view in "The Hugenots of Manikin Town and Their Times," 42 V 330 - 332, believing that the congregation of "Potomoke" was in Stafford (now King George) County. He quotes the King George County Court Order Book 5 January 1721/2: "The Grand Jury's presentment against Timothy Reading and Sarah his wife, for not going to Church is ordered to be dismist with costs, they alledging to the Court that they were dissenters and of the Presbiterian Communion." It was in Northern Neck that Hugh Stevenson, a Presbyterian minister, in 1733, received "harsh and injurious usage...from some gentlemen in Virginia," and complained of it to the Synod of Philadelphia.

An appeal from Northern Neck to the Presbytery of Hanover in 1757 for a supply was followed by services there by Davies, Patillo, Todd and others. The most complete record of the trials and the progress of a group of Dissenters in Virginia is found in the diary of Colonel James Gordon. This gentleman and his brother John came from Ireland in 1738—he settling in Lancaster County while his brother settled in Urbanna. At the time the known fragment of Gordon's diary opens in 1758 the church there was well established, with at least two churches (one in Northumberland), and was led by a group of prominent men. Although they faced the opposition and ridicule of the Established Church, represented in Northern Neck by two unfortunately weak rectors, the wealth and position of the leading men protected them somewhat from the rigors which proved so discouraging to the Hanover group. They were aided and ministered to by Davies and other members of Hanover Presbytery, and Whitefield in 1763 spent several days among them. But the story of Northern Neck, particularly if the references in the minutes of the

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That body sent a petition to the General Assembly of Scotland asking them to intercede "so as to lay a restraint on some gentlemen in said neighbouring province, as may discourage them from hampering such itinerant ministers by illegal prosecutions; and fi it may be, to procure some assistance from his majesty for our encouragement by way of regium donum." Samuel J. Baird, A Collection of the Acts, Deliverances, and Testimonies of the Supreme Judicatory of the Presbyterian Church from its Origin in America to the Present Time (Philadelphia, 1856), 308. Hugh Jones reported to the Bishop of London in 1719 (30 May) that the vestry of Hanover Parish, King George County, had built a chapel and levied a salary to support a layman of "Enthusiastical principals" although there was an Established minister resident. Perry, Collections, I, 246. When Josiah Mackie, in Norfolk, drew up his will in 1716 he included this paragraph: "It [em]. I give my more schoolastick books of the learned languages at Lattin; Greek and Hebrew to be equally divided between Mr. Henry, Mr. Hampton and Mr. Mackness, non-conforming ministers at Poatomoake or thereabouts." 7 V 358 - 361.

Synod of Philadelphia refer to this same group, constitutes a complete story in itself. Although the progress of religion there antedates that in Hanover, there is not only an absence of any record of connection between the two, but almost positive assurance from the accounts of Morris and Hunt that the Dissenters in Hanover were completely unaware of any dissenting group in Northern Neck. (1)

III.

Thus far the accounts have been of the rise of churches, or religious interest, in the Tidewater. But at the time these groups were struggling with lack of leadership and the opposition of the Established Church, Presbyterianism had been planted and was flourishing on the western frontier. In 1705 the Colony had passed liberal land laws hoping to attract settlers to the frontier, but with little success. Later the policy was changed, and large grants were made to entrepreneurs on condition that they settle colonies on them. These men advertised their land in the Middle Colonies among the newly arrived immigrants, and with success, particularly among the Scotch-Irish and the Germans.

In 1732 Joist Hite brought sixteen families to the Vanmeter tract near Winchester, and behind him came groups of immigrant colonists. One of these groups became the nucleus of the Presbyterian congregation on the Opeckon. Within fifteen years the back-country was dotted with Scotch-Irish colonies, most of which became the home of a church. While most of them were in the Valley, some, notably Michael Woods' settlement

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(1) The history of the Presbyterians in Northern Neck is covered thoroughly in "Origin and Early History of Presbyterianism in Virginia," a typed thesis by D. L. Beard in the library of the Union Theological Seminary, Richmond. Armistead C. Gordon wrote, in 1913, an account of his ancestor's life entitled Colonel James Gordon of Lancaster (1714-1768), [n.i.]. The diary of James Gordon runs through many issues of the William and Mary College Quarterly Historical Magazine, beginning 11 W(1) 98.

at Wood's Gap, Albemarle, and John Caldwell's in (what is now) Charlotte and Prince Edward Counties, were in the unsettled land east of the Blue Ridge.

John Caldwell was typical of the capable men who left Ireland and came to America in the first half of the eighteenth century, bringing with them their families, their servants, their friends, and their religion. He and his family landed at New Castle, Delaware, 10 December 1727 and moved west to Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. During the pastorate of John Thomson at Chestnut Level, Pennsylvania (1733-1744), John Caldwell was a member of his congregation. This relationship was to have a great effect on the history of the denomination in Virginia in later years. Of significance in this same connection was the arrival of the dispirited John Craig about 1734 looking for a job and a life work. He taught school in the community, and under the leadership of John Thomson prepared himself to enter the ministry. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Donegal in 1737. The following year John Caldwell determined to lead a colony to a tract of land in Virginia he had visited. But before he brought his group to Virginia, Caldwell presented the following petition to the Presbytery, which Thomson took to the Synod:

> Upon the supplication of John Caldwell, in behalf of himself and many families of our persuasion, who are about to settle in the back parts of Virginia, desiring that some members of the Synod may be appointed to wait on that Government to solicit their favour in behalf of our interest in that place;—overtured, That according to the purport of the supplication, the Synod appoint two of their members to go and wait upon the Governour and Council of Virginia, with suitable instructions in order to procure the favour and countenance of the Government of that province to the layihg a foundation of

> our interest in the back parts thereof, where considerable numbers of families of our persuasion are settling... . (1)

The letter they carried was a dignified request for the "free enjoyment of their civil and religious liberties," on the grounds of "inviolable attachment" to the house of Hanover, and "unspotted fidelity" to King George. Nor was Governor Gooch on his part unmindful of the feelings of his new colonists. He knew the hardy character of these pioneers, and he placed a proper valuation on their settlements as a defence against the Indians. There was no insincerity in his reply to the Synod.

> Sir: By the hands of Mr. Anderson, I received an address signed by you, in the name of your brethren of the Synod of Philadelphia. And as I have been always inclined to favour the people who have lately removed from other provinces to settle on the western side of our great mountains: So you may be assured that no interruption shall come among them, so as they conform themselves to the rules prescribed by the Act of Toleration in England, by taking the oaths enjoined thereby, and registering the place of their meeting, and behave themselves peaceably towards the government. This you may please communicate to the Synod as an answer to theirs.
>
> Your most humble servant,
>
> William Gooch. (2)

Gooch was himself a tolerant man in religious affairs, and, being a Scotchman, in sympathy with the Presbyterians as children of the Church of Scotland. But it is not difficult to see in all the Governor's relations to the Presbyterians, to the New Lights, and to his own Established Church associates, that he was an adroit

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(1) Quoted in Foote, Sketches, I, 103. All accounts agree on the reason for Gooch's attitude toward the determination of these settlers to maintain their religious separation, and toward the Synod of Philadelphia, with his eye cocked toward his unprotected frontier. Appendix Number One in Rev. Edgar Woods' Albemarle County in Virginia (Charlottesville, 1901), 362, 363 contains a list of subscribers to the salary of Rev. Samuel Black. Written from "Ivy Creek," 29 March 1747, the names in the list are preponderantly Scotch, and the congregation is described as "Orthodox Reformed Presbyterian."

(2) Quoted in Foote, Sketches, I, 104.

politician (in the best sense of the word) and more concerned with the welfare of the Colony intrusted to his care than with the religious sects within it, as long as they did not trouble the government. The land these people were coming to was not divided into parishes, and if they had been, there would have been insufficient support to draw a minister there. (1) They were separated by many miles from the Tidewater settlements of the Colony, and the Governor saw little danger of a conflict between the two groups. As long as the newcomers bore the brunt of the frontier hardships, both in an economic and a military capacity, he was quite willing to allow them the freedom of conscience they asked, and which he recognized as allowed under the English Act of Toleration. For many years the absence of conflict between the region to the west and the Established Church bore out the Governor's opinion.

As in the case of the religious interest in Northern Neck, to tell the story of the rapid spread of Presbyterianism in the Valley and Piedmont is to stray too far from the Hanover tale. For, according to the accounts of the Hanover leaders, their break with the Church was practically complete before they know of this dissenting religion to the west. The part it did play in converting the Hanover revival to Presbyterianism will be noted. The fact that the majority of the congregations of the west remained with the old synod in the schism of 1741 further lessened their influence on the contest with the Established Church, which was borne almost entirely by the New Side

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(1) John Craig, referred to above, wrote of the conditions existing in Augusta County before the French and Indian War: "When we were erected into a county and parish, and had ministers inducted, of which we had two, they both in their turns wrote to me, making high demands. I gave no answer, but still observed our own rules when there was no particular laws against them." Foote, Sketches, II, 31.

ministers.

We have examined the rise of Presbyterianism in Virginia apart from the Hanover contribution, seeking the roots of each congregation, and showing their relation, or lack of relation, to the peculair situation in and around Hanover. In no case is there found a direct connection between the dissatisfied people of this section and any other Presbyterian group in the religious ferment of the period before 1743.

III.

To consider only the rise of Presbyterianism in Virginia, however, is to look at only one phase of the movement, and to rob this study of its thesis, that is was not a denominational expansion, but a religious discontent seeking a mode of expression which it was to find in a particular sect.

From the seventeenth century Virginia had in common with the other Colonies a heritage of dislike and distrust of the Quakers. While her government was more lenient than some in its application of the laws against the Quakers, those laws were in no way liberal, nor could Virginia be said to have been free of persecution of the unloved sect. There was more attraction to the Quakers, as there was to the Presbyterians of Makemie's day, in the laws and conditions of the Middle Colonies, yet a few of them bore the persecution of Virginia as their co-believers endured it in New England. Their doctrines were an offense to the Anglicans, and scarcely less so to the Presbyterians. There was no community of interest between the Quakers and other Dissenters, except that of

ridicule and persecution. While it was convenient for the defenders of the Established Church to lump Quakers, Antipedobaptists, New Lights, and "papists" together for purpose of scorn, members of the four groups did not make such a classification themselves.

Of all dissenting groups, though, the Quakers are the only group with whom we know the Dissenters of Hanover were familiar. (1) How early these unwanted sectarians came to Hanover, or when their doctrines were first spread among the people, there is no record. In 1721 John Harris and Thomas Stanley went from Hanover to the Richmond meeting to have their congregation recognized. (2) This group built a meeting-house, called the Cedar Creek Meeting-House, north and east of the South Anna River beyond Ground Squirrel Bridge (near Montpelier post office). As a mark of the universality of the awakening of the late seventeen thirties, it should be noted that these Quaker congregations in and around Hanover also experienced a revival in this period. In many ways this group anticipated much of the trouble to be encountered by the other Dissenters, and their presence may have been an additional factor in the bitterness of the rectors of this section in their denunciation of the New Lights.

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(1) A. H. Newman in The New Schaff-Herzog Religious Encyclopedia, (New York, 1908), I, 471, devotes a paragraph to the activity of the Baptists in Isle of Wight and Surrey Counties under Robert Nordin about 1714. While the group in Hanover probably had heard of them, they did not consider themselves in the same position theologically.

(2) Mrs. Douglas Summers Brown, "Cedar Creek Monthly Meeting and its Meeting House," 19 W(2) 293-298. Mrs. Brown has taken much of her information and figures from the Henrico Minutes, 1721-1749, and the Cedar Creek Minutes, 1750-1775. As a Quaker community Cedar Creek was established sometime before 1720.

The Quakers aroused the authorities of Hanover County as well as the Church by their refusal to pay tithes (to support "the hireling priest"), to present their children for baptism, or to be married in the legal manner. In 1724 three of the Quakers were imprisoned for their refusal to pay their tithes. Four years later the meeting was stirred with a revival of religious under the influence of Joseph Newby, who came from North Carolina. Many converts were won, and new houses were set up. That same year, 1739, the Hanover congregation was expanded into a Monthly Meeting containing Hanover, Caroline and Louisa Counties. With this renewed activity and expansion on the part of the Quakers, it is no wonder that the Church in these parishes should look with alarm on further falling away of their members. The same practices of the Quakers which had aroused the ire of the government were to be foreseen in the New Light zealots, who, while they were to make no denial of the government's right to tax them, they were to follow the Quakers in their insistence upon their own mode of baptism and marriage. If the new Dissenters in Hanover owed no doctrinal debt to the Quakers, it is quite possible that they saw in the Quaker example the path for escaping the Established Church's hold over their personal lives. We could not dismiss without further proof the idea that in their thinking and conversation the example of the Quakers was present in the formulation of many of the arguments and actions of the New Light Dissenters. (1)

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(1) The activity of the Quakers as described in this paragraph has been drawn from Mrs. Brown's "Cedar Creek Monthly Meeting and its Meeting House," 19 W(2) 293-298.

Apart from the groups already considered, there were only two other non-Anglican settlements in Virginia with which the Hanover Dissenters might have been in contact. The first was their near neighbors, the Huguenots of Manakin. Although this group, as emigrants from France under the persecution following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, was intensely Calvinistic upon its arrival in America, it had gradually been absorbed into the Anglican communion. Their last minister of the Geneva model, Jean Cairon of Zurich, had died in 1715, and as their foreign distinctiveness wore away so did their religious differences. (1) The Huguenots enriched the Anglican Church with many of its outstanding Colonial ministers. The proximity of the Huguenots may have affected the hold of Calvinism on this section of the Colony. It might also have been remembered that the Colonial government had recognized the justice of special consideration for this group in the earlier years.

A similar exception was made by the government for the Germans to the north of Hanover. In 1714 a group of colonists were persuaded by the Baron de Graffenried to come to Virginia, after the colonizer and his band had suffered much hardship, both in North Carolina and at sea. They settled the town which came to be called Germanna, on the Rapidan twelve miles from the Rappahannock. Not only were they exempted from all public levies for seven years, but because of their racial and language differences the new parish of St. George was erected for them (what was then) in Essex County. (2)

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(1) This religious acclimation, and the Calvinistic bent of the Church of England in the preceding century is nicely covered in Dr. Brydon's "The Huguenots of Manakin Town and Their Times," 42 V 325-335.

(2) The various German settlements near Germanna are discussed in Lester J. Cappon's Iron Works at Tuball: Terms and Conditions for Their Lease As Stated by Alexander Spotswood on the Twentieth Day of July 1739 (Charlottesville, 1945), 7, 8.

IV.

THE BOOKS.

* * *

It is delightful from the present time, to look back to an occurrence apparently so trivial as the discovery of a few leaves in an old book, and trace the many important events connected with it; to see the workings of providence accomplishing His purposes, and carrying on His great designs of mercy in our favored land. It is delightful to think on the ways of the Almighty, and contemplate the dealings and dispensations of the God of our Fathers.

—— John Holt Rice, in "Memoir of the Rev. Samuel Davies," The Virginia Evangelical and Literary Magazine (Richmond, March 1819), II, 116 - 117.

Illiteracy has been often, in the history of our country, a mark of frontier life. Even when it does not bear the stigma attached to it in settled communities, its effect is felt in the lives of the people. Moreover, in Virginia in 1740, among those people who could read and write, the economic condition of the majority prohibited the ownership of books, which were not too easily obtained anywhere in the Colony. The combination of these disadvantages produced a poverty of religious education justifying the despairing comments of the observers of the society above the fall line in Virginia.

This condition caused an unknown rector to write:

> There is indeed one great disadvantage and inconvenience which I am afraid too many in low-life labour under, and which is one great reason why our Church and Sacraments are generally so thin, namely, the want of proper books, proper treatises, upon these and other religious subjects.
> . . . . . .
>
> A parcel of books well chosen and distributed by the minister, or any other person, who is sensible of the advantage of such distribution, will put a new life into the practice of religion. Pious books distributed seasonably, in families which live without any sense of religion, and consequently are running headlong to hell, may, by the blessing of God, recover them from the misery that threaten them, and make them serious and devout. (1)

The writer of this letter desired to have books sent him to sell for a small sum, believing (and quoting Bishop Wilson for emphasis): "...that the best of books, when lightly given, will be lightly valued, and as lightly made use of." He wanted certain

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(1) This letter in the Virginia Miscellaneous Religious Papers in the Library of Congress is mutilated or incomplete, so that neither name nor address, nor date, remains legible if existing.

books, by name, "...which, as they are both short and plain, are most likely to be read and considered; and they make a much deeper impression upon the mind, than either general admonitions from the pulpit, or particular admonitions by word of mouth."

A letter similar to that quoted above was written by James Craig, in 1759, from Cumberland Parish, Lunenburg. This rector specifies the books which he feels will remedy the situation to a certain extent:

> There is a great demand for books on the Sacraments of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, on Infant Baptism, Family Worship, Beveridges Sermons on the Common Prayer, Directions for the Decent Performance of Public Worship, Bp. Gibson's two Letters for the Instruction of Negroes, and against Enthusiasm, the serious address to Godfathers and Godmothers, etc. (1)

This need was felt by the clergy of the Established Church and the Dissenters alike. John Thomson, the conservative Presbyterian minister in Amelia (now Prince Edward) County, who preferred the Established Church to the fanatics of his own denomination in New Brunswick Presbytery, wrote the following in the introduction to his Explication of the Shorter Catechism:

> Again, it's well known that of late Years great Numbers of Families of Presbyterian Dissenters have come from the Northward to inhabit the back new Parts of this Colony, whose Inclination, it may reasonably be presum'd, is, and will be, to enjoy Gospel Administrations agreeable to their Education; who yet, by Reason of their Circumstances in the World, are very unable to support Ministers of their own Perswasion to preach constantly among them, and instruct them. Another Inconveniency they labour under is, a Difficulty of being supply'd with good and edifying Books, such as might, in some Measure, supply the Want of Preaching: Our Merchants Stores

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(1) James Craig to Thomas Dawson, 8 September 1759, Dawson MSS. The inevitable result of such a lack of religious training is shown in other parts of this letter quoted elsewhere in this paper.

> so far as I apprehend, not being commonly furnished with such Plenty and Variety of these, as of other Goods, and particularly with such Books as are adapted to instruct in the Doctrines and Principles of Religion. (1)

The lack of religious books, particularly in the newer sections of the Colony, may be coupled with the size and inadequacy of ministerial supply in the counties to the west of the fall line to supply a very clear reason for the eagerness with which the settlers welcomed the Presbyterian missionaries. Hanover County, in a state halfway between frontier and culturally established, was not in the same category with some of the counties described by Thomson's and Craig's, or Davies', letters. Yet we know, even without the specific statement in the letters of the Presbyterians to their brethren in Britain, that there was a great gap between the means and education of the land owners, like John Henry and his stepson John Symes, and the "poorer sort," who obviously were attracted to the Morris Reading Houses. The presence of libraries in the homes of the planters influenced in no respect the need of many of the laborers, servants and poor farmers. To them, the conditions described in the letters quoted above may well apply. And it was to these people that Samuel Morris began reading the books of the great evangelistic ministers of England.

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(1) John Thomson, An Explication of the Shorter Catechism... (Williamsburg, 1749), "To the Reader," v. Thomson continues: "While musing and meditating on those Things, and particularly on the Condition of great Numbers of Presbyterian Families that of late have settled in the back Parts of this Colony, and who labour under so great a Scarcity of Ministers of their own Perswasion to labour among them, to teach them both the Doctrines and Duties of Christianity; it came into my Thought to try to compose something of a plain and easy Collection or System of the Principles of Religion, such as might suit the weak Capacities of the youngest and more ignorant, and which might, in some Measure, supply the Want of some other Performances of this Kind, which are easy to be had in Plenty in some other parts of the British World... ."

II.

The various accounts of the beginning of the dissenting movement record the names of the books and authors most instrumental in changing the thought of the men who read them. Few of them, however, are described as belonging to a definite individual. Samuel Miller in his biography of John Rodgers, states that a few leaves of Boston's Fourfold State, belonging to a pious Scotswoman were given by her to a "wealthy planter." He was so pleased with the contents that he sent with his next cargo of tobacco an order for a copy of the book. It was through the reading and study of this book that the planter later related he was "brought to salvation." (1) Another member of the parish church, Samuel Morris, procured through means not related, a copy of Martin Luther's Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians. (2)

These two books are the first known and most easily identifiable vehicles through which certain concerned Christians in Hanover learned that there was a more deeply spiritual, or at least a more emotionally satisfying, type of religious experience than that preached to them from Sunday to Sunday by the Reverend Patrick Henry. But where these two books had stirred the imagination and conscience of these pious men, a third book, a contemporary "best seller," put them in touch with the movement and the man through whom their newly acquired interest was to become known

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(1) Miller, Life of John Rodgers, 31. The books are given their common title in the narrative, and will be more thoroughly identified later in the chapter.

(2) Miller, Life of John Rodgers, 32. Miller, relying on his information from Rodgers, was probably innacurate without meaning to distort the truth when he described Samuel Morris as "another wealthy planter."

to the world. A "young Scotch gentleman," who is no further identified in any of the accounts, gave Morris a copy of Whitefield's Sermons, published in Scotland in 1743. (1) This present of a 1743 edition of these sermons is the second definite date in the revival in Hanover. Although Samuel Morris had been holding meetings previously, it was not until after he received this volume that the first of the reading rooms was built. (2)

From the account of the genesis of the Hanover revival as Samuel Morris told it to Davies we are now ready to examine the narrative of this thesis. All that has preceded is the background of the movement; the remaining factors will be considered as each becomes apparent in following the narrative.

> Before the revival of 1743, there were a few who were awakened, as they have told me, either by their own serious reflections, suggested and enforced by Divine energy, or on reading some authors of the last century, particularly Boston, Baxter, Flavel, and Bunyan. There was one Mr. Samuel Morris, who had for some time been very anxious about his own salvation, who after obtaining blessed relief in Christ became zealous for the salvation of his neighbors, and very earnest to use means to awaken them. This was the tendency of his conversion, and he also read to them such authors as had been most useful to himself, particularly Luther on the Galatians, and his table discourses, and several pieces of honest Bunyan's. By these means some of his neighbors were made more thoughtful about their souls, but the concern was not very extensive. (3)

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(1) Miller, Life of John Rodgers, 35.

(2) Morris' account to Davies: "In the year 1740 Mr. Whitefield had preached at Williamsburg at the invitation of Mr. Blair, our late commissary. But we being sixty miles distant from Williamsburg, he left the colony before we had an opportunity of hearing him. But in the year 1743 a young gentleman from Scotland had got a book of his sermons, preached in Glasgow, and taken from his mouth in short hand, which, after I had read with great benefit, I invited my neighbors to come and hear them; and the plainess and fervancy of these discourses being attended with the power of the Lord, many were convinced of their undone condition, and constrained to seek deliverance with the greatest solicitude." See footnote (3) below.

(3) Because this account is the basis of almost all later writing on the movement, I have included this entire letter of Davies' as Appendix One, as it is recorded in Gillies' Historical Collections, 429 - 433.

A full list of the books used by the Dissenters in and around Hanover, and those brought and preached from by the Presbyterians, can not be reconstructed. But we do know from the various accounts they they included the following:

A Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians by Martin Luther (1483 - 1546), an English translation of the great German reformer's Vorlesung Uber den Galaterbrief written in 1516/17. It is illogical to think that this work was present long without its equally well-known compsnion volume Preface to St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans (Vorlesung Uber den Römerbrief, 1515/16), and this is certainly true in the case of the Presbyterian ministers. Nothing is to be gained in speculating on the possible editions used, except to note that is was an English translation. A third work of Luther's which played a part in the religious education of the Virginians was that collection of his short comments collected, and published even today, under the title of Luther's Table Talk. (1)

Second only to the writings of Martin Luther in the interest and thinking of the "converted" were the books of Richard Baxter (1615 - 1691), the beloved pastor of Kidderminster, England. The Saints' Everlasting Rest; or, A Treatise of the Blessed State of the Saints in Their Enjoyment of God in Glory and Baxter's A Call to the Unconverted to Turn and Live, in one of their numerous and popular editions, are noted in accounts of the Hanover revival and of Davies' Virginia ministry.

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(1) Charles Campbell, History of Virginia (Philadelphia, 1860), 439.

A contemporary of Baxter's was Joseph Alleine (1634 - 1668), a like-minded minister and subject of a memoir by Baxter. An Alarm to Unconverted Sinners: in a Serious Treatise on Conversion is the book of his mentioned by name, but it is possible that it was not the only one used.

A third great English divine whose name was associated with those of his contemporaries we have already noted was John Flavel (1630? - 1691). No single book of Flavel's is mentioned by name, but it is most likely that The Fountain of Life Opened; Or, A Display of Christ, In His Essential and Mediatorial Glory (first published in 1671), or Prophane Swearing Condem'd At The Bar Of Reason (which was re-printed in Charlestown, Massachusetts as early as 1731) were included.

In the generation following that of the evangelical giants we have already noted was Thomas Boston (1676 - 1732), whose Human Nature In Its Fourfold State, Of Primitive Integrity, Entire Depravation, Begun Recovery, and Consummate Happiness or Misery,... was the book directly credited with beginning the revival, according to Morris' narrative. There were other books by Boston with titles similar to that of the Fourfold State that must have delighted the hearts of the New Lights.

Two English ministers who preached and wrote during the period covered by this study should be noted, both because as friends of Samuel Davies they were interested in, and exerted their influence to support, the claims of the Dissenters in Virginia, and because their writings are mentioned in the letters of the Great Awakening. The first of these was Philip Doddridge (1702 - 1751) whose early death prevented the meeting Davies had hoped to have with him. The Rise and Progress of Religion In

The Soul was a "must" on the reading list of Colonial Presbyterians, as is was to be in each of the great waves of religious interest in the nineteenth century. Davies wrote Benjamin Fawcett in March 1755 that he had distributed this book among other sent from England, to both whites and blacks in his congregations. (1) The second writer is that same correspondent Benjamin Fawcett (1715 - 1780) whose own A Compassionate Address To The Christian Negroes in Virginia,... was included in the list of books distributed. This pamphlet also brought down the wrath of Edwin Conway, of Lancaster, on the Presbyterians. For their importance in the latter part of Davies' ministry, the works of one other English divine should be noted. The hymns and paraphrases of Psalms by Isaac Watts (1674 - 1748) were the books most eagerly sought by the slaves in Davies' congregations, as well as their white brethren. On his trip to England Davies visited Dr. Watts' study as a shrine. (2)

The printed sermons of Whitefield, as well as his connection with the Hanover group will be noted later in this study.

III.

Any survey of the revival in Hanover that ignores the content of the books which caused Morris, Hunt, Rice, and their friends to conclude they were not being taught the full Gospel and its purity must be superficial. This is difficult to deal with as history, and has led me to make the statement earlier in this study that certain aspects of the revival lie in the fields of theology and psychology more legitimately than in that of history.

No profound study of either theology or ecclesiastical history is

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(1) Gillies, Historical Collections, 502.

(2) Foote, Sketches, I, 255.

needed, though, to appreciate the place played in the history of the Church by Paul's letter to the Galatians, and Luther's commentaries on that letter. Foote succintly states the introduction of this book to the Hanover narrative: "Another gentleman got possession of Luther on Galatians. Deeply affected with what he read, so different from what he had been hearing from the pulpit of the parish Church, he never ceased to read and pray till he found consolation in believing in Christ Jesus, the Lord his Righteousness." (1)

The letter written in a white heat of feeling by the Apostle Paul to the Christians in Galatia of his belief in the freedom of the true Christian from the Mosaic Law, and of the all-sufficiency of faith as opposed to a doctrine of works, is more clearly and less passionately developed in the Epistle to the Romans. When one considers the importance given rites and observance of outward forms of righteousness in any "established" religion (having no reference to legal establishment), the revolutionary impact of a dedicated study of this doctrine of Paul's is apparent.

A modern scholar evaluates this Epistle and Luther's book on it in terms precisely applicable to the Hanover situation:

> It is not too much to say that this letter of Paul is the Christian declaration of independence... . Ever since, with its bold affirmation of the distinctive Christian beliefs, the Epistle has worked with a quickening and awakening power. It was through an intense study of Galatians that

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(1) Foote, Sketches, I, 120.

> Luther arrived at the convictions which had their issue in the Reformation. His Commentary on Galatians was the manifesto with which he launched his great movement. Most of the later religious revivals have likewise found their inspiration in this Epistle; and there are signs that some of its characteristic ideas are again beginning to vitalise the Christian thinking of our own time. (1)

Understanding the basic relationship between the Epistle to Galatians and that to the Romans, a statement made by Dr. George W. Richards in the Sprunt Lectures in Richmond in 1938 reveals something of the stirring depth of this doctrine, and its relationship to the incident in Hanover:

> The Römerbrief always has been to some an asset, to others a liability. The Römerbrief divided the primitive church; Augustine read the Römerbrief in the garden in Milan when he decided for Christ; Luther in the tower-room of the monastery saw light breaking through the gloom when he read the Römerbrief; Schleiermacher in his own way found help in the Römerbrief; Wesley was converted in the Aldersgate Street meeting in London while hearing Luther's introduction to the Römer-Brief; Barth published his notes on the Römerbrief and precipitated a crisis among theologians after the war of the nations.
>
> Perhaps as long as the world stands, when the twilight and chill of evening settle upon the Church, when men expect God to serve them and do not look to God to save them that they may serve Him, men here and there will light their torches, and their hearts will be strangely warmed at the fires that burn in the Römerbrief. (2)

The majority of the books read by the group in Hanover which left the Established Church were written by the great evangelical divines of England who lived during the religious turmoil of the Civil War years. Virginia had rejoiced as the number of Puritans dwindled in the seventeenth century, but their children were to feel the impact

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(1) Ernest Findlay Scott, The Literature of the New Testament (New York, 1932), 146.

(2) George W. Richards, Creative Controversies in Christianity (New York, 1938), 221.

of ~~that~~ their doctrine. The English principles which were crystallized in the Jerusalem Chamber in Westminster became the creed of British Presbyterianism. When the split occurred in the Synod of Philadelphia, the Westminster Confession remained the basic creed of both groups, but the New Light presbytery seized upon the literature of the evangelistic writers of that crucial period, and their spirit, as the true interpretation of their own fervid faith. The friends of the New Light Presbyterians edited new editions of the revival-inspiring books of Flavel, Baxter and Alleine which once again became "best sellers." (1) Their textual immediacy to any revival is shown in the introductory essay which Thomas Erskine, of Scotland, wrote to an 1828 edition of Baxter's Saints' Everlasting Rest:

> The agitated state of surrounding circumstances gave them continual proof of the instability of all things temporal; and inculcated on them the necessity of seeking a happiness which might be independent of external things. They thus practically learned the vanity and nothingness of life, except in its relation to eternity; and they declared to their fellow-creatures the mysteries of the kingdom of God, with the tone of men who knew that the lightest word which they spoke outweighed, in the balance of reason as well as of the sanctuary, the value of all earth's plans, and politics, and interests. They were upon hight and firm ground. They stood in the midst of that tempestuous ocean, secure on the Rock of Ages; and as they uttered to those around them their invitations, or remonstrances, or consolations, they thought not of the tastes, but of the necessities of men—they thought only of the difference between being lost and being saved, and they cried aloud, and spared not. (2)

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(1) The closeness of this connection and its relation to our study may be seen in the fact that Benjamin Fawcett, a successor of Baxter's at Kidderminster and publisher of an edition of his books, also wrote the Compassionate Address which caused such a furor in Virginia because it contained Davies' letter, the first Appendix of this paper. Fawcett is also responsible for the inclusion of many of Davies' letters in Gillies' Collections.

(2) This quotation appears on page twelve of the small edition published by Lincoln and Edmands, Boston, in 1828.

IV.

These books, and others like them, continued to play a leading role in the awakening of Virginians to a "sense of religion." This was true throughout the years of Davies' ministry in Virginia. His letters to the Dissenting ministers in Britain, and to the Wesleys, are filled with descriptions of the joy with which the people, and particularly the slaves, received the books which he distributed among them. (1) After his trip to England, he served as an agent in disbursing books supplied by the Society for Promoting Religious Knowledge Among the Poor. The greatest demand, after the ministers had brought the new doctrine among the people, and the books of the evangelical writers were no longer necessary in the work of conversion, turned to Bibles, to the paraphrases of psalms by Isaac Watts, and to his song books.

Nor was Hanover the only place in which books played a vital part in the establishment of intense personal religion. The case of William Byrd, already noted, would hardly come under such a classification, but in the case of Colonel James Gordon, of Lancaster County, books served much the same purpose they had in the Morris Reading Rooms. In his diary for 17 June 1759 Gordon wrote: "At home reading--which is much more instructive than the sermons I hear at Church." (2)

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(1) Examples of such letters are included as Appendix Two.

(2) "Journal of Col. James Gordon, of Lancaster County, Va." 11 W(1) 105. As to the type of his reading, the entry for 2 November answers: "At home reading Marshall and Whitefield, two authors I much esteem." (204) And on 8 March 1761: "I bless God I found much comfort in reading Marshall, Doddridge [sic] and Wesley." (218) On 20 September of that year: "Blessed be God, we have comfortable books to read, as we have little or no instruction at church." (224).

In a parallel to the Morris Reading Rooms (or Reading-houses, as they were more commonly called), on the twenty-fourth of that same month Colonel Gordon wrote: "Mr. Crisewell read us a fine sermon--had all the people in that we could." On the fifteenth of July he followed that account with: "Silla C. and Molly went to church. I read a sermon to the negroes." (1)

Just as the Dissenters distrusted the theology of the ministers of the Established Church, so they tended to dismiss the writers who were the favorites of the Anglicans in Virginia. Samuel Davies wrote his brother-in-law, John Holt of Williamsburg:

> My anxiety is heightened when I consider your favourite authors. Tillotson's and Sherlock's Works, the Whole Duty of Man, and such authors, are truly valuable in their place, and handle many points to peculiar advantage; but if I know any thing of experimental christianity, they treat of it very superficially, and, I think, in their most obvious sense, tend to mislead us in sundry things of great importance relating to it, not so much by asserting false doctrines, as by omitting sundry branches of it absolutely necessary. I have examined the matter with some care; and I am sure their delineation of christianity is not an exact copy of what I must experience before I can see the Lord: I must indeed come up to their account of it; but I must not rest there; there is a necessity of experiencing something farther than they generally inculcate. The same thing I would inoffensively observe with respect to all the sermons I have heard in Virginia from the established clergy. (2)

Whether judging from the relative importance placed on these books by the narrators of the revival, or from a considerate weighing of the evidence left in the mass of contemporary records, the first place in the importance of various factors causing the Dissenting movement in Hanover County must be given to the books discussed in this chapter.

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(1) "Journal of Col James Gordon..." 11 W(1) 106.

(2) Samuel Davies to John Holt, n.d., The General Assembly's Missionary Magasine; or Evangelical Intelligencer: For 1805, (Philadelphia, 1806), 580. The printed sermons of John Tillotson (1630 - 1694), Archbishop of Canterbury, and Thomas Sherlock (1678 - 1761) were very popular among Virginia readers in the Established Church.

Their message stirred the readers to reflection and resolution, and goaded them into action. (1) When the Presbyterian ministers arrived the separatists found that they had an almost completely developed community of thought through this common heritage. The theology of the books determined their creed, interpreting the Scripture which they reset at the heart of the converts' religion. The experience and inspiration embodied in the books channeled an independent dissenting movement into a well-marked stream of Christian thought, preserving it as a group, and progenitor of groups, in American ecclesiastical history.

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(1) I do not think that Foote was critically appraising the factors of the movement in Hanover when he wrote: "The first human agency known to have had effect upon them, next after the reports concerning the revivals in the States to the North, was that of religious books, followed by discussions on the weighty truths contained." (Sketches, I, 120. My italics.) The general way in which he states reports of the "religious exercises and excitements" spread through Virginia implies a logical deduction from chronology rather than testimony from Hanover, which seems to disprove such a conclusion.

V.

CERTAIN DEVOUT MEN.

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Religion, always a principle of energy in this new people, is in no way worn out or impaired; and their mode of professing it is also one main cause of this free spirit. The people are Protestants; and of that kind which is the most adverse to all implicit submission of mind and opinion. This is a persuasion not only favorable to liberty, but built upon it.

---Edmund Burke, in his speech on "Conciliation With America."

Satan has attempted to stop the progress of the everlasting gospel in Virginia; but I believe he has overshot himself.

---George Whitefield, quoted in Richard Webster's A History of the Presbyterian Church In America... (Philadelphia, 1857), 242.

In the absence of ecclesiastical guidance, the laymen of St. Paul's and surrounding parishes who absented themselves from services through dissatisfaction, and who acknowledged themselves to be Dissenters, assume primary importance in a study of the Hanover revival. But their importance is not represented proportionately in the surviving records of the movement. Beyond the mention of their names, only unsatisfactory fragments remain from which to attempt to reconstruct their share in the story. Even then the majority of the names, including those of many of the real leaders, are also lost.

Samuel Davies was presented with a call from the congregation in 1748 "signed by about one hundred and fifty heads of families." (1) Such a list would be of greatest aid in determining how widespread the movement was among the people of Hanover as a whole, or whether it was restricted to a class, a local group, or a segment of population with a similarity or peculiarity of background. Should we have such a list, though, or if we should compile a list from the various documents remaining, the destruction of the Hanover County records robs us of the most satisfactory method of checking their economic standing, the position of their land, their occupations and their legal problems.

On the basis of extant records, the obvious person to consider first is Samuel Morris. If there was only one Samuel Morris in St. Paul's Parish at this time there are several references to him in relations other than as a Dissenter. His land was processioned with that

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(1) Foote, Sketches, I, 163.

of his neighbors in 1743, 1755, 1759 and 1763. (1) Unfortunately, the record does not give us the size of his place.

It seems that Samuel Morris was a bricklayer. He is so designated in the court records of the Council on 2 May 1747. (2) On 20 April of that year he is cited merely as a laborer (3), to which title Charles Campbell adds the adjective "obscure." (4) While it is pleasing to finish the description in Campbell's sentence ("of singular simplicity of character, sincere, devout, earnest") it is doubtful if the historian had adequate evidence to support it.

Even before the Hanover Dissenters had even heard of Presbyterians, as a sect, Samuel Morris perfectly filled the office of elder, which he was later to hold in the session of the congregation there. He was deeply disturbed about the religious condition in his neighborhood, and his study of Luther's commentary on Galatians convinced him that the need would not be filled in his parish church. Possibly he had always been a deeply religious man, but he was now moved to do something both about his own personal religion, and that of his friends. Whether he decided to start reading sermons to his family and others after consulting others in Hanover who were similarly moved through the reading of various books, or whether he took the step on his own initiative is not recorded.

While Morris possessed the qualities of a prophet or religious

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(1) The Vestry Book of St. Paul's Parish, Hanover County, Virginia. 1706-1786. Transcribed and edited by G. G. Chamberlayne (Richmond, 1940), 174, 355, 391, 428.

(2) Foote, Sketches, I, 161.

(3) Foote, Sketches, I, 161.

(4) Charles Campbell, History of Virginia, 439.

reformer, he was not a typical saint. He and his friends concerted to disregard the law requiring their attendance at church. Today that might seem the normal action for men who failed to find in that church the answer to their spiritual needs, but not so in the days of the Establishment. If they at first thought their absence might simply be overlooked, when they were called upon to explain their failure to comply with the law "seeing no reason to change their opinions, or to alter the course they had adopted, they determined to submit themselves to the payment of fines imposed by law, and attend church no more." (1)

In addition to this firmness that could defy the law when he felt he was in the right, Morris possessed the zeal and enthusiasm, the energy and unselfish labor, the leadership and interest in others that could lead a social movement. If he was only a laborer, or a bricklayer, he must have sacrificed to devote the time he did to the meetings, and to the building of the meeting-houses. The first of these meeting-houses was built on his land, and how much of the expense was borne by him we do not know. As the gathering was transformed into a congregation, and the opposition of the Established Church was felt, more and more of his time, money and energy was demanded. As interest in the revival spread he was called on to read not only on each Sunday, but during the week as well. After they came into the Presbyterian Church, he often attended meetings of presbytery and synod in the Colonies to the north.

It can be accepted safely, without any proof, that when the session of the Presbyterian congregation in Hanover was first created, one of the ruling elders was Samuel Morris. He attended the first and second

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(1) The statement of Rev. James Hunt in an article, "Origin of Presbyterianism in Virginia," Evangelical and Literary Magazine, II, 345.

meetings of the Presbytery of Hanover as the ruling elder representing that congregation. (1) On 23 February 1759 James Gordon noted in his diary that Captain Morris accompanied Davies to Northern Neck on a preaching trip. (2) Even before Davies' arrival Morris had been acting as a representative of the group, being one of the four delegates to New Castle Presbytery in May 1745,—carrying a petition which resulted in the trip of Gilbert Tennent and Samuel Finley to Virginia.

Much of the temper of the movement in Hanover was directed by the personal evangelical faith of Samuel Morris. It was fitting that he should have been chosen an elder in the new congregation. Yet along with his zeal and piety went some of the uncharitable bigotry that characterized both sides of the quarrel over the awakening. Being thoroughly convinced of the truth on his side, he failed to see the justice of some of his opponents' positions. Having been persuaded by his own study of the Scriptures and the books of the evangelical reformers, he undervalued the tried and proven schools of theology.

In his list of the faults of the New Lights, Patrick Henry (with the aid of John Thomson) set forth this belief of the local group: "That all true believers, and especially converted ministers, have the Spirit of discerning, whereby they can distinguish an hypocrite or a formal professor from a sincere Christian. And this Spirit is claimed by some here in Hanover, particularly Samuel Morris and Thomas Green two of my neighbours." (3) This example of the

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(1) Morris' name appears several places in the manuscript Minute Book of Hanover Presbytery (beginning 1755) in the library of the Union Theological Seminary, Richmond. Called hereafter Hanover Presbytery Records, (no page numbers).
(2) "Journal of Col. James Gordon..." 11 W(1) 102.

(3) Patrick Henry to William Dawson, 13 February 1744/5, Dawson MSS. This letter with its analysis of the behavior of New Lights, which Henry wrote the Commissary after John Thomson's visit is included as Appendix Three.

complaints against the New Lights is chosen as being typical, and particularly because it was applied to Morris.

The same forwardness that made Morris a willing leader in the revival singled him out for attacks by the opponents of the movement. Even if he were not the outstanding leader of the movement, his name was attached to the reading-houses, he was a neighbor of the rector's and well known by him, and he held stubbornly to his course before the courts. For these reasons, probably, he was fined repeatedly and indicted along with Roan and others in the attempt in 1746-47 to crush the movement. It may well be that we have only the accounts of his fines while equally frequent charges may have been made upon the others. As this cannot be proved it must be assumed that Morris bore a larger share of the animosity of the New Lights' opponents as he bore a like share of work and leadership.

One of the most interesting and revealing accounts of the activity of Samuel Morris is found in the journal of the House of Burgesses. The decision of Morris and his friends to leave the Church of England had social repercussions in the field of politics, as well as the legal difficulties that their absence from church brought them. Taxes to support the Established Church fell on the Dissenters as heavily as on the loyal members of St. Paul's. The rapidly expanding settlement of the back counties in Virginia called for frequent division of the large counties. Concurrently the parishes, so often too large for one rector were divided. Each session of the legislature was faced with petitions for such divisions, and the opposition to those petitions by some of

the taxpayers. In 1752 Hanover County was the object of a proposed division. Quite naturally the question of division was a campaign issue in the election for burgesses. Among the candidates were John Syme, Junior (son of Mrs. John Henry's first husband), John Chiswell, who had been elected a burgess first in 1744, and Henry Robinson. When the first two were successful in the election, Henry Robinson protested the result.

On 26 March 1752 the House of Burgesses considered the protested election. The primary complaint against the election of John Chiswell was the action of Samuel Morris and friends of his among the Dissenters. When Chiswell had asked Morris for his support in the election, Morris had countered with a question of his stand on the proposed division of Hanover County. Chiswell not only stated that he would oppose the measure, and always had, but wrote and signed a statement to that effect. Morris then sought out Robinson and questioned him on the measure. The candidate refused to commit himself on the question, either through scruples on campaign promises or through his lack of sympathy for Morris' position as a Dissenter. He declared before the House that Morris' reason for opposing the measure was the added financial burden that would be placed on taxpayers in the smaller parish resulting from the division, while at the same time supporting a minister of the Presbyterian congregation. He admitted that churchmen were equally averse to the measure, but added the information that Dissenters of Morris' sect were very numerous in the county. (1)

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(1) Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia 1752-1755, 1756-1758, H. R. McIlwaine, editor, (Richmond, 1909), 61. I have relied on this account for all facts in this case, and have not seen it referred to in any other account of the Awakening in Virginia.

An attractive account of Morris' later years is left us by Dr. Archibald Alexander. He informs us that Morris moved from Hanover to Tat Creek Campbell County, and it was there, during the revival of 1789, that the young Alexander was introduced to Samuel Morris by William Graham, his teacher.

> As we approached through the fields we saw the old gentleman walking homeward as if, like Isaac, he had been meditating. He was at this time between seventy and eighty years of age, but had the appearance of firm health. But for his being bowed with age, his stature must have been six feet. His frame was large, his shoulders were broad, and though he was somewhat bald, the thick hair about the sides of his head was not gray. He had one son and a number of daughters. Mr. Morris gave Mr. Graham a detailed account of the origin and progress of Presbyterianism in Hanover before Mr. Davies came to settle there; the same I presume which he put into writing for Mr. Davies, who included it in a letter to Dr. Bellamy. (1)

A leader among the New Lights who might well have passed unnoticed in "one Grant" who joined Morris in opposing the division of Hanover County. Henry Robinson in protesting the county election of 1752 described Grant as one "who was not a Freeholder of the said County but one of the Principal Men among the Dissenters." (2)

Approaching John Syme with the statement that he head heard Syme approved the division, Grant obtained from him a denial. This promise Syme, like Chiswell, put on paper and asked Grant to give it publicity. This was done at a meeting of the Dissenters three days before the election. Although some of the Dissenters voted for Robinson, and the bond was admitted to have had little effect on the election of Syme, the house agreed with the disgruntled candidate that written promises of this kind had too much influence on the election, and the result of

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(1) William Wirt Henry, The Presbyterian Church and Religious Liberty in Virginia (Richmond, 1900), 7.
(2) Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, 1752-1755, 1756-1758, 61.

the ballot was invalidated.

If Robinson's statement that Grant was not a Freeholder of Hanover County is taken to mean that he was not a resident of that section, possibly he is the Captain Grant with whom Davies stayed in Philadelphia, as mentioned in his diary on 15 September 1753. (1) This Captain Grant was a correspondent of Dennys de Berdt, who later gained prominence as colonial agent for Massachusetts and Delaware. On 1 October 1754, while in England, Davies listed among his letters from home a letter from Captain Grant. (2)

In the radical wing of the congregation, at least before Davies' arrival, was Thomas Green. Like Morris, Green was a neighbor of the rector of St. Paul's, and in the rector's mind of equal fanatical zeal. He was one of those who claimed "the Spirit of discerning" a true Christian. Moreover, he had spoken harshly of the Episcopal liturgy to his neighbors. As an example of the errors in the liturgy he had pointed out that the phrase of the Te Deum "All the earth doth worship thee" was false. (3)

Equally odious to Mr. Henry was Roger Shackleford. In addition to being apostate in his faith, Shackleford had injured the pride of the rector. He told members of Henry's congregation that the rector

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(1) Foote, Sketches, I, 232. In marking the close relationship existing between various leaders of the Great Awakening the correspondence in the Whitefield letters in the Library of Congress might be noted. There are letters from de Berdt (7 April 1739) and William Shippen of Philadelphia (11 September 1758) among the American letters. A letter book of de Berdt's printed in the Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts (Boston, 1912), XIII, 294ff, shows this even more clearly in the letters to Wheelock, for whose Indian School de Berdt raised funds, and others, and mentioning Davies' Curse of Cowardice which de Berdt published.

(2) Foote, Sketches, I, 275.

(3) Henry to William Dawson, 13 February 1744/5, Dawson MSS.

was an "unconverted graceless man" who preached "damnable doctrine." To add insult to injury, he said this while on the way home from one of Henry's sermons. Not only that, he had sent back a printed letter of the Bishop of London which the rector had sent him after having read half of it, saying he was sure the bishop was an unconverted man, and prayed God would "open his eyes." (1)

Another of the New Lights of this radical wing was a "Mr. Allen." He was noted by a biographer of George Whitefield's as a pious man, and a member of Davies' church in Hanover. On one of Whitefield's trips to Hanover, during a sermon, Allen "fell on the ground at full length, suddenly, as if shot through the heart, and lay for the remainder of the evening as one who was dead." (2) This man may have been James Allen who attended Presbytery with Davies in 1757 as an elder from the Hanover congregation. (3) While in England, Davies also received a letter from Mr. Allen from Hanover. (4)

In addition to these men, there were others who are known either by name only, or through the accounts of their descendents. One of them was David Rice, Senior. His father, Thomas Rice, had come to Virginia in 1680, and had bought a farm in Hanover County. Thomas Rice was of Welsh descent, as were several other members of the congregation. While on a trip back to England to receive an estate left him, he was killed, or died, leaving his family destitute. (5) Although the statement was

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(1) Henry to William Dawson, 13 February 1744/5, Dawson MSS.

(2) Joseph Belcher, George Whitefield: A Biography With Special Reference To His Labors In America (New York, c1857?), 381.

(3) Hanover Presbytery Records.

(4) Foote, Sketches, I, 275.

(5) There are a number of biographical sketches of the emigrant Rice

made by his descendents that David Rice, Senior, was converted under the ministry of Samuel Davies, it should be noted that one of the original meeting-houses was built on the land of David Rice.(1) It is possible that Rice was a member of the original group, and the tradition given from his son's memory in old age; or, possibly, the friendly attitude toward the Dissenters which would allow them to build a meeting-house on his land later brought him into the closer relation to them.

Finally, we should notice the men who appeared in the court records in the period before Davies' arrival, and in his license to preach in Hanover. The first of the recorded trials began 19 April 1745, and they continued until after Davies final removal to Hanover in April 1748. Joshua Morris was presented for allowing John Roan to preach in his house. Joshua Morris is the only man in the group at the time who lived in James City County, and his home seems to mark the boundary of the movement on the Peninsula. (2) Although the charge against Thomas Watkins, son of Edward Watkins of Henrico, might have been against any person who disagreed with the Church, he was later identified as one of the men on whose land a meeting-house was built. (3) These two men were tried in the spring of 1745, and were again included in the bill brought against

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but no satisfactory account of this family before the time of the younger David Rice, "Father" Rice of Kentucky. R. H. Bishop wrote An Outline History of the Church in the State of Kentucky containing the Memoirs of Reverend David Rice (Lexington, 1824), which is the standard reference. Thomas D. Suplée in The Life of Theodorick Bland Pryor (San Francisco, 1879), 21, 22, gives an unsatisfactory sketch, confusing the father and son. John Holt Rice, editor of the Evangelical and Literary Magazine was a grandson of the Rev. David Rice, and it is probable that much in the accounts given in that magazine represent the activity or recollections of the editor's family.

(1) Foote, Sketches, I, 160.

(2) Foote, Sketches, I, 137.

(3) Foote, Sketches, I, 138.

certain Dissenters in the October session of the courts. This bill for misdemeanors was also brought John Roan, James Hubbard, Charles Rice, Isaac Winston, senior, and Samuel Morris. (1) Three days after Davies' received his first license to preach in Hanover (14 April 1747) this same group, except Roan, were again called to Williamsburg to continue the trial. In May of that year someone, presumably Patrick Henry, had remanded from the November session of the Hanover courts a series of charges against Samuel Morris, John Sims [Symes], Roger Shackleford, Thomas Green and William Allen, which cases were granted a hearing at the same time Davies and his friend John Rodgers were applying for new licenses. (2) In addition, we should include in this list of men known to be associated with the movement in its early years the Dissenters in New Kent County who signed a petition to their court that "a place on the land of William Clopton, in this county, may be recorded..." (3) The names which could be read were Blackmore Hughes, Roger Shakleford, Richard Muir, William Crumpton, Robert Brain, John Thompson, Charles Cuningham, Simon Clement, Abraham Lewis, Thomas Francis, and Julius K. Burbidge. (4) We have in these lists of names a sprinkling of the leaders of the Dissenting movement, and some of the followers, but we certainly miss many names which should have been recorded as the founders of the movement.

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(1) Foote, Sketches, I, 142.

(2) Foote, Sketches, I, 161. This may be the Allen referred to by Whitefield rather than James Allen.

(3) Foote, Sketches, I, 169.

(4) Foote, Sketches, I, 169.

VI.

THE READING-HOUSES.

* * *

These families were wont to meet in a private house on Sundays to hear some good books read, particularly Luther's; whose writing I can assure your Lordship were the principal cause of their leaving the Church; which I hope is a presumption in their favour. After some time sundry others came to their society, and upon hearing these books, grew indifferent about going to church, and chose rather to frequent these societies for reading. At length the number became too great for a private house to contain them, and they agreed to build a meeting house, which they accordingly did. This far they had proceeded before they had heard a dissenting minister at all. They had not the least thought at this time of assuming the denomination of Presbyterian, as they were wholly ignorant of that church.

——Samuel Davies to the Bishop of London, quoted in Foote's Sketches, I, 121.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of the Hanover revival, and the one on which the least material remains, is the nature and services of the meeting-houses built by Samuel Morris and his friends. Certainly the organisation of an unincorporated group to raise houses of worship and the type of government and procedure directing the worship in those houses are the most important clues to this social movement. Yet it is at precisely this point that the lack of records is most acute. While the loss of the county records impoverished any attempt to study the economic condition of the members, it more certainly removed the traces, legal and on paper, of the physical property of the congregation.

The original license in 1747 granted Davies authorised him to officiate in meeting-houses on the land of Samuel Morris, David Rice, and Stephen Leacy, in Hanover County, and of Thomas Watkins in Henrico County.(1) As the houses were licensed upon petition from the counties, rather than upon erection, it is possible that some of these were preceded by the three houses mentioned in the license granted in 1748: that is, on the land of Joseph Shelton, near Owen's Creek, Louisa, of Tucker Woodson, Goochland, and of John Sutton, Needwood, Caroline. (2)

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(1) Foote, Sketches, I, 160. The building on the land of Samuel Morris was the predecessor of Davies' home church, later called Pole Green, the site of the present Salem Church. It was in Pole Green Church that Hanover Presbytery was organized in 1755. Note in 23 V 422.

(2) Foote, Sketches, I, 168. "The place of worship named on Owen's Creek on the lands of Joseph Shelton corresponds to the site of Old Providence Church. ...This old church is still standing, now near its second century mark, and is the oldest house of worship in the county. The building is frame, small and simple in all its details; alike the dissenter folks who first sat in its pews, it has an atmosphere of the old Covenanters, deeply religious. About it stands the forest of primeval oak and pine, which brings back the memories of the early days when the meeting-house was a most important place in the community life." Malcolm H. Harris, History of Louisa County, Virginia (Richmond, 1936), 180.

The historian Charles Campbell has stated very simply from the narratives of the participants the reason which led to the construction of these houses.

> Morris's dwelling-house being too small to contain his increasing congregation, it was determined to build a meeting-house merely for reading, and it came to be called "Morris's Reading-Room." None of them being in the habit of extemporaneous prayer no one dared to undertake it. Morris was soon invited to read these sermons in other parts of the country, and thus other reading-houses were established. (1)

With no record left of the appearance of the meeting-houses, a very vague picture may be conceived of them by drawing upon other meeting-houses of that section of Virginia in that period. Even that attempt is severely limited when the motives of the congregation are taken into consideration. This was not to be a church, and for that reason apparently no attempt was made to copy the buildings of the Established Church. The obvious dislike of the Dissenters for their Quaker neighbors would prevent their consciously copying their meeting-houses, and yet they would appear to be the most obvious local patterns. (2) The simplicity and uniformity of the Presbyterian (and other Dissenter) churches along the frontier would be the logical pattern if the Hanover congregation had been familiar with them. There being no reason to doubt the statement of Morris that they were unfamiliar with any Dissenting denomination except Quaker would argue a similar ignorance of the type of houses of worship used by such churches.

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(1) Charles Campbell, History of Virginia, 439.

(2) Mrs. Brown, in "Cedar Creek Montly Meeting and its Meeting House," 19 W(2) 293 - 298 gives descriptions of the early Quaker meeting-houses in Hanover, including a picture of a later building.

By 1743, however, we know that some of the Hanover congregation had visited the community on Cub Creek (in what is now ~~Prince Edward~~ Charlotte County) and had seen the primitive house of worship used by the Presbyterian congregation there. For the houses built after that date, there is reason to believe that the knowledge of the style of these buildings may have influenced the people in and around Hanover. Also after this date the congregation had the information brought by the itinerating ministers who followed William Robinson.

Because of the absolute simplicity of these pioneer meeting-houses --a simplicity which gave a similar appearance to the unstudied contruction of Presbyterian, Lutheran, Moravian, and Quaker houses alike— we may notice a few features to predicate the type of a building the Morris reading-house might have been.

Even if logic would not have indicated that they were built of wood, later records show this. Moreover, the homes and Quaker meeting-house in Hanover would clearly indicate a frame building. A number of similar meeting-houses survived long enough to be pictured in books and magazines, and from them we may imagine all but the exact size and internal arrangement of the house.

A Presbyterian meeting-house was erected at Tinkling Springs the year before Robinson visited Hanover. This building was fifty by twenty-four feet, and its interior plan is given on the next page. (1) The building of this church, under conditions similar to those existing in

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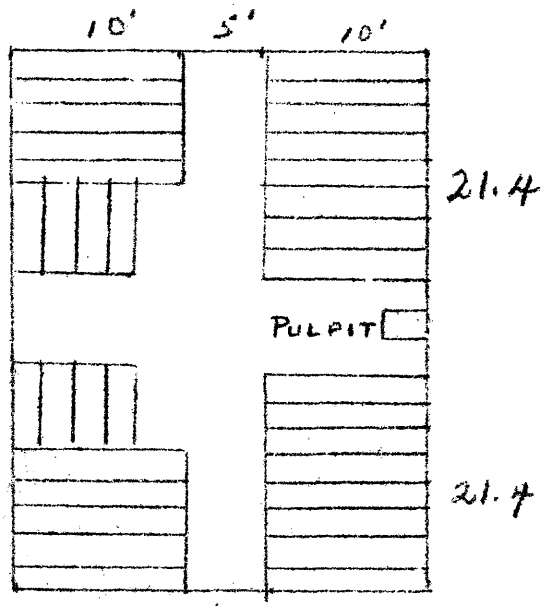
(1) This plan, and an account of the building of the church, is taken from the photostate of the original found in the Virginia State Library. The Tennent Church, at Freehold, N. J., was built forty by sixty feet, with three entrances on the longer side. The pulpit was on the north side of the house immediately opposite the central door, so that the minister faced the width instead of the length of the church. The pulpit was narrow and surrounded with a sounding board. Belcher, George Whitefield, 117.

Hanover (with the exception that it was built by an existing Presbyterian congregation, with that background, and directed by a minister), may be examined further for an approximation of cost, and possible method.

The budget was as follows:

For the meeting-house land	£ 16 - 7 - 7 1/2
For underpinning the meeting-house	3 - 15 - 0
For drawing the timber	5 - 0 - 0
For building the meeting-house	44 - 17 - 4
For deed and surveying	0 - 15 - 0
Three days making benches (two men)	0 - 7 - 6
To 182 feet 2 1/2" plank	0 - 14 - 0
To hawling the same	0 - 2 - 6
	£ 71 - 17 - 17 1/2



Later this congregation set up advertisements to remind members to pay their pledges toward building the church. A man was employed for forty shillings a year to "keep the meeting house clean, to open and shut the doors and windows before and after service" (as often as required by the congregation, "to bring in water for baptism and to find firing for the retiring house and church."

Rules of the session provided that only one family should occupy a seat, "unless some be unprovided for when the seats is full," and that those in charge "shall place such families or persons in said seats where we see the most room they paying their proportionable part of said seat where placed." (1)

While it might be unreasonable to expect the Dissenting families in Hanover to follow such a pattern in setting up an organization not designed to be a church, still it is possible that such a system might have been installed, then or later, from a familiar background in the Established Church.

There were laws both in England and America regarding the conditions under which Dissenters might hold their meetings. Some of the laws were obsolete reminders of the days of religious warfare at home, laws forbidding them to close or lock their doors and similar prohibitions. The congregation meeting in the Morris reading-houses may or may not have strictly obeyed such laws as were still on the statute books of the Colony, but they would have been in danger in not observing them in a community where officials were seeking opportunities to discomfort and fine them. (2)

While the reading-houses built by Morris and his friends, together with the Quaker meeting-houses, are the only Dissenting buildings for worship in Hanover of which we have record, there may have been others built. Originally ~~The spread of~~ the discontent was neither spread nor monopolised

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(1) All the quotations and figures used in this paragraph and the preceding page are taken from the MSS minutes of the Tinkling Springs Church referred to in the last note. The manuscript is not clearly legible throughout, and I cannot account for the missing six-pence in the expense account.

(2) An interesting expression of the feeling toward such gatherings appeared in the Virginia Gazette, 19 August 1737, in an article on Freemasonry: "The Act of Toleration does not allow of private conventicles,

by the new Presbyterian group and their itinerant ministers. Of his neighbor John Brunskill, of St. Margaret's, Caroline, Patrick Henry wrote the Commissary in 1747:

> ...his clerk has left the church, and become lay preacher or reader, in a meeting-house in his parish, to which some of our Hanovarians resort, and last sennight a lay preacher from Mr. [Barret's] parish officiated there: and I'm now afraid that if the Enthusiastick Preachers return from Pennsylvania, the infection will spread further than I ever imagined. (1)

It seems likely that these lay-preachers (so considered by the Established Church, if not by themselves), were utilizing one of Morris' reading-houses. They may or may not have been of the same Dissenting movement. Although the term "Hanovarians" as used by the rector in this letter is indefinite, the knowledge we have of the way the country people of the period travelled miles to hear the dissenting ministers, and their rejection of the legalized custom of the Church that one minister served a congregation within his own parish, it is not unsound to assume that the members of original dissenting groups formed by Robinson into a congregation, and which had been recently ministered to by Davies, were among the "Hanovarians" resorting to the meeting-house in Mr. Brunskill's parish to hear his ex-clerk in his new self-chosen role as lay preacher. (2)

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even in cases of conscience, but enjoins that all meeting-houses or places of worship, shall be not only licensed but publick; and all others are punishable as contrary to law."

(1) Patrick Henry to William Dawson, 3 December 1747, Dawson MSS.

(2) Even a cursory reading of James Gordon's diary, Whitefield's journal, or Davies' letters will give immediately and graphically a picture of the eagerness of these people to attend services, daily if possible, at any reasonable distance, often fifty miles or more.

VII.

THE GREAT AWAKENING.

* * *

The world is still sleeping its "sleep of death." It has been a slumber of many generations; —sometimes deeper, sometimes lighter,—yet still a slumber like that of the tomb, as if destined to continue till the last trumpet sound; and then there shall be no more sleep.

. . . . . .

Yet in one sense the world's sleep has never been universal. Never has there been an age when it could be said there is not one awake. The multitude has always slept, but there has always been a little flock awake. Even in the world's deepest midnight there have been always children of the light and of the day. In the midst of a slumbering world some have been in every age awake. God's voice had reached them, and His mighty power had raised them, and they walked the earth, awake among sleepers, the living among the dead.

—Horatius Bonar, in the Editor's Preface, v, to John Gillies' Historical Collections.

There is a danger that in noting the isolated condition of the Dissenters in Hanover County we may lose sight of the movement throughout the world, the origins of which it is a symbol. That movement was in full swing in the years that Samuel Morris and his friends were discovering the principles which had brought about the Awakening. It robs the Hanover movement of none of its originality to study the theological and social bases of the revival which was sweeping the Colonies, and which was preparing the path by which the Hanover congregation should be received into the broad stream of Christian thought in which it was to find its fullest expression.

While there may be shades of interpretation and slight disagreement over the effectiveness of religion as it was preached and practiced at the [illegible] of the eighteenth century, there is virtual unanimity among writers, both contemporary and modern, that is was languishing. Although that in itself might call for further definition, any study of the moral and spiritual condition of the period illustrates beyond the need for definition the effect on the everyday life of the people of a sterile theology and uninspired clergy. Cotton Mather in New England had no more cause to lament the decline of piety and the low state of morality than had James Blair to excoriate the vice of Virginians and the worthless ministers being sent over from Britain. Explain or evaluate it as you will, the spiritual condition of Europe and America in the first three decades of the eighteenth century was notable for its deadening effect upon the society it might have quickened.

In the very deadness of religion lay one of the causes for the revival to follow. When a religion ceases to function and to satisfy its followers, it must, from the very nature of the religious urge within man, be replaced by a more vital force answering that need.

James Truslow Adams has described the condition in the Colonies:

> The repressed emotions and longings for a religious life that should be something more than intellectual assent to creeds and outward observances had been stirring the breasts of vast numbers of people who, asking for bread, had been handed polished stones by the ministers of the established churches. If the inevitable reaction carried many with it, nevertheless the ebb of the movement left in all the colonies large bodies of evangelical congregations to whom religion had become something far more vital than it had been before and which called for expression not merely in church attendance but in all the activities of life. (1)

"Stirring the breast of vast numbers" was a feeling that was to break out in scores of places in action. In Germany it manifested itself in the pietist movement that was to shake the established churches of the Continent and to send Moravians throughout the world on their missions. Great or small as might have been their doctrinal validity, their influence and activity was great, whether among the Indians of Western Pennsylvania or the laborers of England. Before the middle of the century the perturbed Bishop of London wrote his Commissary in Virginia:

> The most pervailing sect here, is the Moravians; a sly cunning people, who make their disciples believe, that God has at this time a great work to be done upon earth, and that they are to be the doers of it. In Yorkshire, Mr. Ingham, one of their English leaders, has erected a magnificant structure for the purposes of their worship

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(1) James Truslow Adams, Provincial Society, 1690-1763 [Vol. III of A History of American Life, Schlesinger and Fox, editors] (New York, 1927), 284. The short account of the Great Awakening given by Mr. Adams in pages 279 - 286 is a good, clear appraisal, though not without bias.

> and discipline, which they say has not cost less than £400. Count Zinzendorf, their great patriarch, has been expected; I suppose, to open it with greater solemnity.
>
> We have now very little writing on either side; and indeed it is hard to deal with people, whose first principle it is, that they have received an appointment from God, and carry on the great work under the direction of the Holy Spirit; and who have modesty to expect that the world should believe them, without any evidence besides their own confident assertion. (1)

The bishop had good reason to worry about the power of a religion that taught the emotionally suppressed lower classes "that God has at this time a great work to be done upon earth, and they are to be the doers of it." It was just such teaching that gave the sects of the Awakening (for that is what they actually were, even when remaining within ecclesiastical bodies of older names and established theological schools) much of their drawing power among the masses in Europe and America.

It would be as impossible as it would be unnecessary and historically unsound to separate the Great Awakening in the American Colonies from the similar movements in Europe. The Methodist movement in England was bred of the same conditions and followed the same course as the Colonial movement. Although the ministry of the Wesleys in Georgia had no effect upon the Awakening, the impression made by the Methodist group at Oxford upon George Whitefield was of outstanding service to the Colonies. It is true that Whitefield and the Wesleys parted company over certain doctrines, but there was always a feeling of kinship between the dissenting movements in England and America. Davies could write to

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(1) Edmund, Bishop of London to William Dawson, 15 July 1747. This letter from the Dawson MSS is printed in 20 W(2) 215.

John Wesley, whom he had met on his trip to England in 1754: "Though you and I may differ in some little things, I have long loved you and your brother, and wished and prayed for your success, as zealous revivers of experimental Christianity. If I differ from you in temper and design, or in the essentials of religion, I am sure the error must lie on my side. Blessed be God for hearts to love one another." (1)

Reports of the Wesleyan revival appeared in the Colonial magazines and newspapers, and the peculiar expression of the two movements was so similar that the Bishop of London referred in his letters to the group in Hanover as Methodists, although they had never heard of Wesley or Methodism.

Because of the similarity in the movements, it is possible to supply with reasonable validity many missing clues to the American picture from the English Dissent. Although the frontier conditions of the Colonies made the situation there and in Europe dissimilar there was less difference within the clergy. Particularly is this true of the Virginia clergy of the Established Church, who were trained in Britain and who were not only similar to their English co-workers, but were in many cases the poorest examples of their system of training.(2) The observations of Oliver Goldsmith upon the preaching of clergymen in England were from listening to men trained in the same schools, and at the same time, as Patrick Henry, William Stith, the Dawsons, and less able men in Virginia. (3) English Dissenters found in the preaching of

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(1) Samuel Davies to John Wesley. The letter is recorded by Wesley in his Journal under the date 28 January 1757 with the note "which I received two or three months after was dated on this day."

(2) This unfortunate situation, as discussed in Chapter Two, may be verified from the letters in the Dawson MSS, Fulham and Lambeth Transcripts.

(3) See the title page to Chapter Ten for Goldsmith's observation.

Davies and Gilbert Tennent inspiring expressions of their own religious thought. So there is every reason to consider the two movements as kindred expressions of the same revival.

The Colonies at the opening of the eighteenth century were rapidly expanding, both in area (with its concomitant expansion of population) and in commercial and intellectual activity. Third and fourth generation Americans lived beside large numbers of immigrants of the month before. The motives for coming, moving or staying in a place were no longer uniform even in a particular community. Dr. William W. Sweet, of the University of Chicago, has based his studies of religion on the advancing American frontier on the theorgy that when religion is the cause for migration the purpose of the migrants will preserve the religious foundation of the community for two or three generations, but when migration is occasioned by economic factors the break-down in the moral and religious structure of the group is immediate. (1)

Some of the poor state of religion in these years may be credited to the working of such a theory. The majority of the people entering the Colonies were by 1730 coming for economic reasons, and in the majority of the cases in which religion had been the prime motive for migration, the colonists were entering their third and fourth generation. Among the Scotch-Irish and German immigrants the motives were mixed, and it is significant that it was among these people that the Awakening in America began and was nourished. But it cannot be overlooked, even before condering Hanover County specifically, that the contributions of those two groups of immigrants was negligible in that particular section of Virginia.

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(1) This apparently sound assumption runs through all of Dr. Sweet's books as they appear in the bibliography.

Certain fundamental traits characterize most, if not all, expressions of the revival of emotion in religious groups. They should be borne in mind throughout the consideration of any particular incident, or "revival." In speaking of the Great Awakening of 1740, Charles Hodge defines such an experience:

> The term revival is commonly used in a very comprehensive sense. It includes all the phenomena attending a general religious excitement; as well those which spring from God, as those which owe their origin to the infirmities of man. Hence those who favour the work, for what there is divine in it, are often injuriously regarded as patrons of its concomitant irregularities; and those who oppose what is unreasonable about it, are often as improperly denounced as the enemies of religion. It is therefore only one expression of that fanaticism which haunts the spirit of revivals, to make such a work a touchstone of character; to regard all as good who favour it, and all as bad who oppose it. That this should be done during the continuance of the excitement is an evil to be expected and pardoned; but to commit the same error in the historical review of such a period, would admit of no excuse. Hard as it was then either to see or to believe, we can now easily perceive and readily credit that some of the best and some of the worst men in the Church, were to be found on either side, in the controversy respecting the great revival of the last century. The mere geographical position of a man, in many cases, determined the part he took in that controversy. A sober and sincere Christian, within the sphere of Davenport's operations, might well be an opposer, who, had he lived in the neighbourhood of Edwards, might have approved and promoted the revival. Yet Edwards and Davenport were then regarded as leaders in the same work. (1)

A revival grows, is sustained, and wanes according to certain rather well defined laws. F. M. Davenport has reduced these observable traits to three laws.(2) The law of origin is that impulsive social

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(1) Charles Hodge, Constitutional History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States (Philadelphia, 1840), 14. I think the length of this quotation needs no apology, as a summary could hardly be shorter.

(2) F. M. Davenport, Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals (New York, 1905). This paragraph is a loosely paraphrased quotation of the laws as given on pages two, four and seven of this book. The application to Hanover was my own reaction to the situation after Davies' arrival, before having read the book.

action originates among people who have the least inhibitory control. While the plan may not come from this group, it is those who are least self-controlled who first move to carry it out. According to the law of spread, impulsive social action tends through imitation to extend and intensify in geometrical progression. Finally, according to the third law, that of restraint, those people who are accustomed to subordinating feeling to rational consideration will act as bulwards against the advance of the overwhelming tide of imitation and emotion. It was a variant of this third law that gained for the Hanover revival an eminent position, for where the lack of restraint caused similar movements to burn themselves out quickly, "calm leadership within and critical judgment from without combin[ed] to hold in leash the natural excesses of the movement."

While we are primarily interested in noting the application of these laws to the case in Virginia, and while it would not be proper to consider the movement as a whole except insofar as it affected the congregation at Hanover, the effect of the revival there was to link an isolated community to a national movement. (1) The result of the Awakening of 1740 was as noticeable on life in all the Colonies as it was on the life of the individual. Thomas Stacy Capers has summarized this effect on the American Colonies:

> It seems paradoxical to say that the revival tended to produce both a spirit of national religious unity and a spirit of religious independence; but that is just what it did.
> . . . . . .

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(1) This is the observation of many writers, but is most noticeably developed by Dr. Sweets (e.g. "It broke the barriers of colonial reserve, as well as sectarian isolation and gave the American people, for the first time, a common intellectual interest in the movement, and a personal interest in its leaders."). It is impossible to read either Whitefield's journals or the letters and diaries of the itinerant ministers and not feel this unexpressed (and unpredicted) result.

> Not only was this revival the efficient cause of a change of sentiment with regard to Christianity as a power, but it also produced a change of sentiment within the Church herself as to the real nature of true religion. It also provoked changes in church organization and in church practice, and as its results have revealed, it changed the very type of American Christianity itself, substituting for a cold, lifeless Puritanism a warm and vital piety. (1)

When we understand the revival which swept the world in the eighteenth century, and which in America took the form of the Great Awakening, we can turn to the specific case in Hanover with a clearer view of the characteristics and actions for which we are seeking. But before we examine again the factors in this section of Virginia, it is necessary to appraise the two factions which opposed each other in every instance of awakening. The habit of attaching names in every-day life to movements and to people strongly affects their course of action. In our case for study, a group of individuals came independently to a stage for which their neighbors had a tag, already full of meaning and distinction. (2)

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(1) Thomas Stacy Capers, "The Great Awakening In The Middle Colonies," S J 313-315.

(2) By distinction, I mean distinctiveness without the additional connotation of socially approved merit. Likewise, the term "enthusiastic" in this paper is used strictly in the meaning then current, of emotional instability and theological heterodoxy,—or if by its friends, of "vital piety." Dr. Charles Chauncy, of Boston, in his sermon "A Caveat Against Enthusiasm," defines the term as it was used by the members of the Established Church (there and in Virginia): "But the word is more commonly used in a bad sense, as intending an <u>imaginary</u>, not a <u>real</u> inspiration: according to which sense, the <u>Enthusiast</u> is one, who has a conceit of himself as a person favoured with the extra-ordinary presence of the <u>Deity</u>. He mistakes the workings of his own passions for divine communications, and fancies himself immediately inspired by the SPIRIT OF GOD, when all the while, he is under no other influence than that of an over-heated imagination." (Page 3 of the sermon printed in Boston in 1742, following <u>A Letter to the Reverend Mr. James Davenport...</u>. The copy in the library of the College of William and Mary has no title page, and it is not listed in the catalogue of the Library of Congress, nor do I recognise it in Sabin.

The name applied to the group was "New Light," and its invariable adjective was "enthusiastic." Once tagged with this designation, the individuals of the dissenting group both aspired to, and were charged with, all the other characteristics associated with that name. In a similar manner, once they were considered a congregation of that nature, they were attracted to (and propelled by the excluding society toward) other societies bearing that name. For that reason, perhaps more than any other, their adoption by the New-Side Presbyterian Church, and their acceptance of that denomination, was a matter of course following natural laws and utterly without the planned consciousness of either party.

II.

It would be difficult to put one's finger on the exact differences between the regular branches of the churches and the New Lights, as the differences, and the degree of intensity of those differences, depended often on the individual pastors who guided the local movements. Of the things they had in common, William Foote, a century closer to the movement than we, defined these points:

> But on the subject of "experience of religion" there soon sprung up a great division. Respecting man's fallen nature, —the extent and influence of depravity and original sin,—the necessity of the influences of the Holy Spirit, in conversion to God, and in devotional exercises, —the imputation of Adam's guilt and of Christ's righteousness, —justification by faith, and the absolute necessity of the new birth, —on all these, there was perhaps little diversity of opinion. But whether true spiritual exercises implied or admitted great excitement, —whether conversion was a rapid or very gradual work, —whether personal experience of religion should form part of the examination of candidates for the ministry, —whether a collegiate course of education was a necessary preparation for the ministry of the gospel, —on all these subjects there were formed two parties, which debated, with due vehemence, the proper exercises of a Christian man, and of a Christian minister.(1)

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(1) Foote, Sketches, I, 107.

A devoted minister of a strict theology, Foote was probably too charitable in his list of matters on which they agreed. Preventing the agreement on the first point of this summary, Davies lamented the views of a dissenting minister in England, a Mr. Louthian, who followed the "modern sentiment in divinity": "I had a long dispute with him, upon original sin. I found that the principal reason of our difference was, that those secret tendencies and workings of the heart, and that langour in religion, which I looked upon to be sinful, he thought entirely innocent, and apprehended that men complaining of these, complained that they were placed so low in the scale of being; and he was of Mr. Pope's mind—

> "In pride, in reasoning pride, our error lies;
> All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies.
> Aspiring to be gods, if angels fell;
> Aspiring to be angels, men rebel." (1)

A further note in Davies' diary serves to accent the divergence of opinion on basic matters, and not merely on "experience of religion." Noting that many of the ministers were fine, educated, moral men, he still questioned their stand: "But what shall I say? They deny the proper divinity and satisfaction of Jesus Christ, on which my hopes are grounded. They ascribe a dignity and goodness to human nature in its present state, contrary to my daily sensations: and they are not so dependent upon divine influences as I find I must be. Are they or I mistaken Is the mistake in such circumstances essential? It is with the utmost reluctance I would admit the conclusion: and yet I cannot avoid it. ...Some of them go off to the Church of England, and others fall into deism." (2)

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(1) Foote, Sketches, I, 265.

(2) Foote, Sketches, I, 267.

Nor does the last indicate a feeling on Davies' part that the division was along denominational lines. An entry in his diary a few days later shows the differences in the opinions of the leaders of the movement, and bears out at least one of Foote's points of diversity:

> Yesterday we waited on Messrs. John and Charles Wesley. Notwithstanding all their wild notions they appear very benevolent, devout and zealous men, that are labouring with all their might to awaken the secure world to a sense of religion; and they are honoured with success. But I am afraid their encouraging so many illiterate men to preach the gospel, will have bad consequences. I heard one of them last Tuesday night, but he explained nothing at all. His sermon was a mere huddle of pathetic confusion, and I was uneasy, as it might bring a reproach upon experimental religion. The despised Methodists, with all their foibles, seem to me to have more of the spirit of religion than any set of people in this island. (1)

While Davies expressed himself so strongly about the lack of preparation by the Methodist preachers, he was one of the group so caustically assailed by Patrick Henry in Virginia: "In a short time they ordained a great many young men, of much zeal for their newfangled principles, but little knowledge, some of whom were taken from the plaough, their pretended conversion supplying in place of learning." (2)

Here again generalization from a few examples was incorrect, as Davies hastened to point out to the rector, and it is just as dangerous to apply points of doctrine and behavior to the movement as a whole. Yet there were many men at the time, and even within the movement itself, who were critical of the excesses and peculiarities of the ministers and congregations of the Awakening. In order to minimize the prejudice that creeps into most criticism of a movement one is not a member of, or is

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(1) Foote, Sketches, I, 275.

(2) This quotation is taken from Patrick Henry's reprint of John Caldwell's An Impartial Trial of the Spirit operating in this Part of the World (Williamsburg, 1746), and is quoted on page 70 of Bost's "Samuel Davies." It is

opposed to, an appraisal of the bad features by two of the New Light Presbyterians may be inserted. The Reverend Aaron Burr, a New England trained minister brought into the New Light Presbytery of New Brunswick partly through the influence of Whitefield, and later second president of Princeton, made these observations on the obverse side of the Awakening, which may be summarized thus:

> 1. Their being led by impressions and impulses made on their own minds, with or without a text of Scripture, and taking their own passions or imaginations for the operations of God's Spirit;
> 2. Giving heed to visions, trances and revelations;
> 3. Speaking of divine things with an air of levity, vanity laughter, etc.;
> 4. Declaring their judgement about things openly and freely in the absence of the "unawakened," whether they were converted or not; making thier own feelings a rule to judge others by;
> 5. For laymen to take upon them to exhort in public assembly;
> 6. Separating from their minister under a notion of his being unconverted. (1)

Certainly these charges coming from a man sympathetic to the movement can be taken as fair, and they contain many of the features found so objectionable by the conservative branches of the denominations. Even more telling, and adding to the list of objectionable features of the more rabid of the Enthusiasts, was a criticism made in a letter from Gilbert Tennent to Jonathan Dickinson concerning James Davenport. No man had more influence in spreading the New Light principles through the Presbyterian Church than the writer of this letter, but his disagreement with the excesses of the famous fanatic show clearly the wide range of temperments within the movement. He thought that Davenport's judgement of other men's spiritual state was "imbottomed upon a false base (vis)

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answered in Davies' Impartial Trial, impartially Tried, and convicted of of Partiality... (Williamsburg, 1748)

(1) Aaron Burr to Dr. Bellamy, 28 June 1742. Quoted in W. B. Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit (New York, 1859), V, 69.

that a certain or infallible knowledge of the good estates of men is attainable in this life from their own experience; the practice is Schismatical, inasmuch as it sets up a new form of Communion which Christ has not fixed." He objected to untrained preachers and to "the practise of singing in the streets" as a "piece of weakness and Enthusiastical ostentation." The objection he made to the practice of setting up separate meetings because the ministers were supposedly unregenerate would have surprised his enemies who considered him the arch-schismatic. Finally he repeated his feeling about immediate revelation: "I must disclose my abhorrence of all pretense to immediate inspiration, all following of immediate impulses as an Enthusiastical and perillous ignis fatuus." (1)

To bring the principles down to the concrete form in which they appeared in the teaching of the itinerant missionaries in Hanover County, the Reverend Patrick Henry summed up the New Light doctrines in a lengthy letter which is given as Appendix Three. These he gathered from observation, local hearsay, and from the visit made him by John Thomson, the Old Side Presbyterian minister from Amelia County.

Through the length of Virginia where the older Scotch-Irish congregations on the frontier came into contact with the New Light converts to the east there were unfortunate splits in the congregations as the new doctrine, embraced by some, with its emphasis on emotion conflicted with the staid "faith of the fathers." In Augusta County, a true frontier

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(1) This letter is quoted from a typewritten copy in an auction catalogue, so I can give no source for the letter. It was written by Tennent to Jonathan Dickinson 12 February 1741.

congregation, the Rev. John Craig chose to remain with his brethren in the Old Side Presbytery of Donegal. He wrote of his New Light neighbors:

> Having seen the conduct of ministers and people when I was in Pennsylvania, that maintained these new doctrines, examined the controversy, had free conversations with both parties, applied to God for light and direction in the important concerns, which was done with time and deliberation, not instantly, I attained clearness of mind to join in the protest against these new and uncharitable opinions, and the ruin of Christ's Government. This gave offence to two or three families in my congregation, who then looked upon me as an opposer of the work of God, as they called it, an enemy of religion, and applied with all keenness to their holy and spiritual teachers, to come and preach, and convert the people of my charge, and free them from sin and Satan and from me, a carnal wretch on whom they unhappily depended for instruction, to their souls' utter destruction. They flying speedily came and thundered their new gospel through every corner of my congregations and some of them had the assurance to come to my house, and demand a dismission of some of my subscribers who had invited them, being tainted with these notions formerly. But Providence so ordered that affair, that they gained none of my people that I know of; my moral character stood clear and good, even among them; but they freely loaded with these and such like, poor, blind, carnal, hypocritical, damned wretch; and this given to my face by some of their ministers. And when I administered the Lord's Supper to my people, they mockingly said to their neighbors going to it, what, are you going to Craig's frolic? I thought God had given me a difficult plot to labor in, but I ever called upon him in trouble, and he never failed to help. (1)

Craig not only felt that he was on the right side of the question, but he thought highly of those on his side, as the New Lights admired or excused their brethren. Whereas the Dissenters of Hanover found John Thomson unacceptable to them, and Patrick Henry found him acceptable as a minister and a welcomed guest in his home, so Craig found provided in him "a home [at Chestnut Level, Pennsylvania], a maintenance,

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(1) Foote, Sketches, II, 30, 31.

a faithful and able friend, a sincere Christian...whose praise is deservedly in the church." (1)

If the ministers of the Old Light Presbyterian Church found fault thus with the enthusiastic discontented in their congregations, the ministry of the Established Church went them one better. The Reverend James Maury, who ranked high in the Virginia ministry for his personal merit, wrote Commissary Dawson in 1755:

> What they are, tis needless to mention to you, Sir, who for some years past have had frequent opportunity of remarking, what heats and dissentions, what breaches of charity, what ruin and decay in disaffection in the people to regular pastors, of unblemished morals and unquestionable abilities, together with many other unhappy effects, have usually attended the ministry of itinerants and Enthusiasts in this Colony, wherever they have either boldly intruded, or been legally licensed. (2)

To understand why people holding the New Light views of religion should look upon their neighbors of the Established Church as "carnal," we have but to look at a section from a Christmas sermon preached in Williamsburg at least four times between 1732 and 1740, and such a sermon as might have been preached by any competent minister of the Church:

> Those who place religion in a morose dislike, and pretended detestation, of all the innocent unforbidden pleasures of life; and think that a sower, melancholy, reserv'd and sullen temper is the only true sign of Grace, seem wholly to forget, that it is God alone who created these earthly blessings; that it is He only who bestows them on us, and makes us capable of taking pleasure in them. It is none of the smallest of those privileges that

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(1) Foote, Sketches, II, 30.

(2) James Maury to Thomas Dawson, Fredericsville, 6 October 1755, Dawson MSS.

> are annex'd to the Fear of the Lord that it maketh a merry heart; that it giveth joy and gladness, and a crown of rejoicing. What mistaken prejudices soever some men may entertain against an easy, a cheerful, and a sprightly temper; how inconsistent soever they may think it with that harsh, rigid, and severe notion of religion, which they have been brought to form; yet certain it is, that such a frame and temper of soul, as this, is so far from being a proof, that a man hath no sense of God and goodness upon his mind, that it is rather an arg [argument?] that he hath made great advances in religion... (1)

Even such balanced and cheerful men as Davies and Whitefield seldom spoke in the pulpit of the joy of their religion, and even more seldom of a "merry heart," or a "crown of rejoicing" for their hearers, in this life, at least. If the rector did not truly characterize all the leaders of the New Light movement with his "sower, melancholy, reserv'd and sullen temper," he certainly did describe the main burden of their theology. Had there been no unusual emotional excitement attached to the Awakening, still the hell-fire and brimstone of the New Lights, their preoccupation with the next world, and insistence upon the "carnal, damned" state of men in their condition of original sin would have alienated them from their neighbors of the Established Church.

The ministers and protagonists of the established and conservative branches of each denomination understood well the use of ridicule and aspersions on the intelligence of those who, in most communities, made up the New Light congregations. In England and America the Methodist, New Light Presbyterian, Baptist, Moravian and other dissenter sects

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(1) The draft of this unusual and charming sermon is found in the Dawson MSS with no name attached to it, but with the note that it was preached in Williamsburg on Christmas in 1732, 1736, 1738, and 1740. Possibly Dawson inherited it from James Blair.

touched by the Great Awakening had to be prepared to meet the scorn that was universally heaped on their theology and emotionalism. From his experience with the Methodists and others in England, Oliver Goldsmith stated most succinctly the principle of disparagement:

> Ridicule has ever been the most powerful enemy of enthusiasm, and properly the only antagonist that can be opposed to it with success. Persecution only serves to propagate new religions; they acquire fresh vigour beneath the executioner and the axe; and, like some vivacious insects, multiply by dissection. It is also impossible to combat enthusiasm with reason, for though it makes a show of resistance, it soon eludes the pressure; —refers you to distinctions not to be understood, and feelings which it cannot explain. A man who would endeavour to fix an enthusiast by argument, might as well attempt to spread quicksilver with his fingers. The only way to conquer a visionary is to despise him; the stake, the faggot, and the disputing doctor in some measure ennoble the opinions they are brought to oppose: they are harmless against innovating pride; contempt alone is truly dreadful. Hunters generally know the most vulnerable part of the beasts they pursue, by the care which every animal takes to defend the side which is weakest; on what side the enthusiast is most vulneralbe, may be known by the care he takes in the beginning to work hisdisciples into gravity and guard them against the power of ridicule. (1)

It was against this gravity that much of the ridicule was directed. The despairing letter from the Bishop of London to Commissary Dawson, which we noted earlier in this chapter, was the result of such an "attempt to spread quicksilver with his fingers." While there were many educated, and sensitive, New Light ministers and followers of "experimental religion" who felt keenly the ridicule of the world about them, and the failure of many scholars and leaders to agree with

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(1) Oliver Goldsmith, "Letter CXI. On the Different Sects in England, Particularly the Methodists," The Works of Oliver Goldsmith (London, 1854), 446,447. These 123 letters originally appeared in The Public Ledger beginning 24 January 1760, and were gathered under the title "The Citizen of the World."

their point of view, there were others who were not at all perturbed. A friend of Whitefield's in England had this answer: "Many are joyfully travelling heavenwards, while a carnal ridiculing world stands amazed and ever wonder, what is the matter? and saying that the most learned men are not led aside by these preachers, like the blind Jews of old have any of the Scribes and Pharisees believed on him? but their not believing was not a sufficient proof that he was not the Messiah..."(1)

III.

The Great Awakening in America had no specific place of origin, yet a thread of continuity can be traced through it as soon as the local revivals affected, or became affiliated with, the religious life of other communities. In some cases this was due to physical contiguity, in others to the itineracy of the New Light ministers. The main stream of the Awakening with which the Dissenters in Hanover were to become identified may be stated, fairly, to have begun in the Raritan Valley of New Jersey, in the Dutch Reformed congregation of Rev. Theodore J. Frelinghuysen. The familiar signs of private prayer meetings and the interest of lay workers appeared under the ministry of that pastor. At some time between 1720 and 1726 this ministry was recognized as a revival.(2)

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(1) John Jones to Whitefield, Woodstock, England, 17 July 1743, Whitefield Letters, in the Library of Congress.

(2) Other symptoms forecasting the nature of the coming Awakening also appeared in this revival. Frelinghuysen was accused by some of his congregation of preaching Labadist doctrines. He excommunicated and expelled four members, who, in turn, printed a reply to his sentence which they sent to the Classis of Amsterdam. It was printed by Peter Zenger: [Boel, Tobias] Klagte Van Eenige Leeden der Nederduytse Hervormde Kerk, Woonende op Raretans...(New York, 1725).

In neighboring New Brunswick, the Presbyterian minister was Gilbert Tennent. Tennent was deeply stirred by the Dutch congregation's revival, and by his contact with Frelinghuysen. Under the preaching of John and William Tennent, brothers of Gilbert, similar revivals arose. By 1738 the region between New York and Philadelphia was spotted with revivals, particularly in the Presbyterian congregations of the men who had been trained in the Log College of William Tennent, Senior.

As the principal story of the Awakening in the Middle Colonies and the South after 1730 is properly the story of the New Side Presbyterian denomination, it is necessary to sketch the rise of that branch of the church. William Tennent had been a minister in the Established Church in Ireland. Becoming convinced that the Established Church was not scripturally sound in its organization he left the Church, and with his family came to America about 1716. Tennent felt that one of the outstanding needs of American religious life was a proper education for more ministers, so he began a school in his pastorate in Neshaminy, Bucks County, Pennsylvania. He was assisted by his son Gilbert, who had been trained in Ireland, and among the many young ministers they trained were his sons John and William. Gilbert left the school to accept the pastorate at New Brunswick, and John that at Freehold, New Jersey. Under both of these men revivals flourished. In 1732 John Tennent died and was succeeded in his pulpit by his brother William.

As the emotionalism of these revivals gripped the ministers, the breach between the conservative and "enthusiastic" preachers within the Synod of Philadelphia widened. In 1738 it was apparent that there was a clear there was a division between the pupils and friends of

William Tennent, many of whom were Irish by birth, and the majority of the ministers in the Synod, predominantly New England by birth or training. In August 1739 George Whitefield entered these Colonies for the first time, and was immediately accepted with honor among the New Light ministers and their congregations. (1) It may be attributed to Whitefield's influence (although geographical location may have played as large a part) that the two outstanding ministers in New Jersey, both from New England, joined the recently erected New Brunswick Presbytery which was composed of the Tennent group. Jonathan Dickinson of Elizabeth City and Aaron Burr of Newark both added prestige and stability to a group that was theretofore distinguished for neither.

The schism in the Synod was completed by the acceptance of John Rowland by New Brunswick Presbytery against the direction of Synod, (2) and by Gilbert Tennent's famous sermon on "The Danger of an Unconverted Ministry," preached at Nottingham, Pennsylvania, on March 8, 1740. The following year the recalcitrant presbytery was separated from the Synod, and in one section of the country the Great Awakening found itself an organized church.

To the Dissenters in Hanover, this body was the Presbyterian Church. The only minister of the Old Side who touched their group was the Rev. John Thomson, and he was rebuffed by the congregation with more firmness than charity. The only other contact the Synod of Philadelphia had with

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(1) "It is impossible to tell with what pleasure the people of God heard these truths confirmed by a minister of the Church of England, which, for many years, had been preached by their own pastor." Hodge, Constitutional History, 34.

(2) Two primary points of dispute were preaching within the bounds of another congregation,—which Synod forbade in 1738, and which the New Lights ignored—, and the fear of the conservatives that New Brunswick Presbytery would flood the Church with half-educated ministers. This latter prompted the demand that Synod approve the applicant, and John

Tidewater Virginia before the schism was healed in 1758 was the memorial sent to Governor Gooch in 1745. (1)

In many ways the development of the New Side Presbyterian synod was coincident with the spread of the Great Awakening in the Middle Colonies. The emotional excitement spread from Freehold to the congregations under John Rowland at Lawrence, Hopewell and Amwell. Where one or two were moved by each sermon in 1739, the excitement was pronounced in 1740. The young people of Newark turned from their amusements to religious emotionalism in 1739, but even after the preaching of Whitefield the Elizabethtown congregation was not stirred in that year. They joined the revival the following year, led by their young people (but with no "estatic raptures"). (2)

Whitefield inspired the building of a New Light church in Philadelphia, which, in 1743, called Gilbert Tennent as its pastor. The final link in the clearly traceable chain from Frelinghuysen's revival to the establishment of the congregation in Hanover, Virginia, was forged by the outbreak of emotional awakening in the church at Fagg's Manor (New Londonderry), Delaware. Following the example of his teacher, William Tennent, Samuel Blair had erected in his pastorate at Fagg's Manor a Log College modeled after his alma mater at Neshaminy. While Blair was away on a visit an itinerating minister aroused the people of Fagg's Manor to the emotional revival which was rapidly spreading through the country. (3) This revival, continued by Blair for a

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Rowland was the test case. A complete account is found in "The Erection of New Brunswick Presbytery..." by Rev. Geo. H. Ingram, 6 J 212ff.

(1) Foote, Sketches, I, 139.

(2) Hodge, Constitutional History, 32.

(3) Hodge, Constitutional History, 38. Some were aroused to "audible crying; a thing previously unknown in that part of the country."

period of years, influenced two men in a way later to be felt in Virginia. The first of these men was William Robinson, who assisted Blair for a time in his school. Robinson had come from England, having left the country somewhat in disgrace and had spent several years teaching school in New Jersey and moving about aimlessly. He was converted and entered the ministry, being ordained by New Brunswick Presbytery in May, 1741. Robinson spent most of his short pastorate as a missionary for the Presbytery supplying vacant pulpits and making long trips. As a member of the new New Castle Presbytery, he was sent in the winter of 1742 to preach to the petitioners from the south of the James River and the Haw River, in North Carolina. It was on this journey that he was contacted by the representatives of the Hanover congregation.

The second, and younger of the two, was Samuel Davies, a student of Blair's. Davies was probably taught by Robinson also, and received Robinson's library at the time of the latter's death in 1746.

When Whitefield had gone from Philadelphia to New York in 1740 the Awakening had not followed him to New York City. But at the same time the revival had gripped the Middle Colonies, in New England a similar movement had arisen. Less than two years after the death of John Tennent the congregation of Jonathan Edwards, in Northampton, Massachusetts, had been moved to a feeling so similar to that in the churches we have noted that the two movements were quickly recognized as one, and branded with the same name. In December of 1740 Whitefield continued his journey into New England, and was followed by Gilbert Tennent. At the time Whitefield was only twenty-five and Tennent was about forty, and there

was less disparity in their positions than Whitefield's prominence might suggest. Both were as coldly received by Dr. Charles Chauncy and other conservative ministers of New England as they had been in Philadelphia. But the Great Awakening in the American Colonies was linked from New England to Georgia into one conscious movement, led by a group of men with a single aim, and who even on brief acquaintance found themselves personally compatible, even when not in perfect accord.

IV.

The people of Virginia were not unprepared for the coming of the New Lights among them, nor had their leaders failed to prepare them to resist the evils of its heresy. As early as 1736 a passing remark in a humorous letter in the Virginia Gazette alerted unwary Virginians by means of the directions given a traveller to reach Christ Church, Dublin: "There is a Preeching-House by the Gate, neerer Hand, but for the very Sals o' ye dinna gang in till it, for they are New-Lights." (1) Long before George Whitefield made his first appearance in Williamsburg the Gazette had carried news items, some repertorial and some outspokenly critical, of his rise to fame in England, and of his coming to America. In 1739 the following items appeared:

> We hear from Oxford that the Vice-Chancellor hearing of Mr. Whitefield's arrival there, sent him word that he must not preach there, and hoped he would leave the place; which he did accordingly the beginning of this week. (2)
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> . . . . . .
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> On Tuesday night the Rev. Mr. Whitefield went to expound to a Society on Newgate Hill, but finding 2 or 3000 people in the street, he preached to them from the shop window; and yesterday he preached to about 10,000 at Kennington-Common, where he preaches again this evening at 6 o'clock. (3)

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(1) Virginia Gazette, 19 November 1736.

(2) Virginia Gazette, 20 July 1739.

(3) Virginia Gazette, 27 July 1739, dispatch of 3 May 1739.

[In resume: he was heard at Kennington-Common by a crowd of 20,000 people; 40 coaches, besides chaises, and about 100 on horseback; "and though there was so great a multitude, an awful silence was kept during the whole time of singing, prayers, and sermon." He collected £12 for his Orphan-House in Georgia.] (1)

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On Sunday last the Rev. Dr. Trapp preached his fourth and last sermon in answer to Dr. Whitefield and the Methodists; showing the nature, folly, sin and danger of being righteous over-much; which sermons are now printed at the earnest request of his audience, the parishioners of Christ-Church, Harlington, St. Laurence, and St. Martin's in the Fields. (2)

The people in Virginia in whom the vague stirrings of discontent with their religious life were just beginning to be noticed were given the opportunity in the decade before 1750 to chose for themselves the path they would take. As the Awakening flamed in the north and the Hanover Dissenters prepared to make their break with the Church, the great prophet of the New Lights, George Whitefield himself, passed through Virginia in December 1739.

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(1) Virginia Gazette, 27 July 1739, dispatch of 8 May 1739.

(2) Virginia Gazette, 17 August 1739, dispatch of 26 May 1739.

VIII.

GEORGE WHITEFIELD.

* * *

Ranging seems my province; and methinks I hear a voice behind me saying, "This is the way, walk in it." My heart echoes back, "Lord, let thy presence go with me where thou pleasest." In the midst of all America, dear America, is not forgotten. I begin to count the days, and to say to the months, "Fly fast away, that I may spread the gospel-net once more in dear America."

---George Whitefield, quoted in Belcher's George Whitefield, 323.

* * *

Sinners, think not that I expect to convert a single soul of you by anything that I can say, without the assistance of Him who is "mighty to save." Go and stand by that river, as it moves on its strong and deep current to the ocean, and bid it stop, and see if it will obey you. Just as soon should I expect to stop that river by a word, as by my preaching to stop that current of sin which is carrying you to perdition. Father in heaven, see! they are hurried on towards hell; save them or they perish.

---George Whitefield, quoted in Belcher's George Whitefield, 381, from a sermon preached beside a river in Virginia.

Occasionally there appears in the life of the Church, as of other institutions, a man of abounding energy and ability, who can gather arout him as many ardent followers as he raises bitter foes, inspiring the one group to intense devotion, the other to violent denunciation. Where the one overlooks his faults, the other misunderstands his motives; where the one will find an excuse for his imprudence, the other will cast asperaion upon his good deeds. Such a man in these years of the stirring conscience was George Whitefield.(1)

In the spring of 1738 Whitefield arrived in Georgia in response to an appeal by the Wesleys. He was young, enthusiastic, and an inveterate traveller, already famous for his eloquence in the pulpit, and at the height of his popularity in the Anglican Church. More than that, he had been called to the diaconate and signalled out for honors at a very early age, and had come into contact with the Methodist movement at Oxford. His fame had spread as rapidly as he had risen to prominence, and wherever he was to go in America his reputation was to run before him. It would be unthinkable to consider the Great Awakening in America without the ministry of Whitefield; it would be equally unthinkable to consider him the author of the movement. Wherever he went great crowds gathered to hear him, but they were crowds interested in the Gospel he preached. His itinererary on each of his great journeys through the Colonies passed through the centers of areas stirred by

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(1) George Whitefield was born in Gloucester, England, in 1714. After spending his youth vacillating between devotion to extremely ritualistic religion and being a modest scoffer and rake he was drawn into the Holy Club of the Wesleys. In 1736 Bishop Benson relaxed his own rule and admitted Whitefield to the diaconate before he reached his twenty-third birthday. (Harris Elwood Starr in the DAB).

the preaching of other burning evangelists, and shaken by the emotional disturbance of the awakening conscience. His eloquence and appeal to personal religion fanned ever higher the interest already quickened, and it would be as foolish as impossible to minimize the importance of his ministry in this movement.

Whitefield's absolute lack of a sense of denominationalism was of great advantage to the Awakening. His preaching was to the unconverted, and his appeal was to turn to Christ,—beyond that he cared nothing for the sect to which his hearers belonged, or which owned the building in which he preached. Throughout his ministry he remained in the Anglican Church, he administered its rites to its members, and, though opposed by the majority of its clergy and hierarchy, he never was expelled from its communion. (1) Possessing strong views of the nature of Christianity, he conformed absolutely to no school of doctrine. He was opposed, at times, no less vigorously by the Calvinists than by the Arminians. His disregard for schools of theology was carried over into the field of church government, for he wrote: "I am persuaded there is no such form of church government prescribed in the book of God as excludes a toleration of all other forms whatsoever." (2)

Of equal importance to the Awakening was the effect of Whitefield's incessant travelling in binding together the local groups into one great revival, and serving as a powerful link with the movement in England.

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(1) In later life, Whitefield told John Erskine, in Scotland, that if he had held at the time he applied as a candidate for orders the view he held in 1740 he would not have sought ordination from a diocesan prelate. Webster, History of the Presbyterian Church, 252.

(2) Belcher, George Whitefield, vii.

Of course, Whitefield was not alone in this respect, for itineracy was a mark of the New Light clergy, and the unusual mobility of the preachers served to enhance in the eyes of the converted, if not of their opponents, the significance of the Awakening to the Colonies and to the Christian world. But the thirteen crossings made by Whitefield between 1738 and his death in 1770 served to bind ever closer the interest of the new spirit in Britain and the Colonies.

The entire course of the great evangelist's rather long ministry was not even in its accomplishments and enthusiasm. While his ordination at first protected him from the outspoken opposition of the Church, this attitude changed to one of open hostility as he allied himself more closely with Dissenters of all kinds. For many years he enjoyed admittance to pulpits denied other Enthusiastics, but this privilege, like the opposition of the Church, varied according to time and place, and often those who had welcomed him on a previous trip would close their doors against him. (1)

The newspapers and magazines of the Colonies, like those of Britain, constantly carried articles and letters concerning Whitefield, by both his friends and detractors. From the widespread circulation of the Virginia Gazette, and from the witness of the men of the Hanover movement, we can be assured that the people of the back parts of Virginia knew of his work and its results. In 1739 the Gazette carried this London dispatch:

> To the great satisfaction of the Master Mechanics bout town, many of whose giddy brained workfolks, male and female

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(1) "Here [Charleston] he soon perceived that by field preaching he had lost his old friend the commissary [Alexander Garden], who once promised to defend him with life and fortune. However, at the request of the Independent minister (who continued his friend to his dying day) he preached in his meeting house." John Gillies, Memoirs of Rev. George Whitefield (Middletown, Conn., 1838), 45.

> have neglected their business to follow Mr. Whitefield, ('til they have wanted a Sunday dinner) that gentleman embarked this week on board the Elizabeth, Capt. Hall, now lying at Rothershith, bound for S. C.: she touches at Philadelphia, where the preacher, no doubt, will to a great advantage dispose of his valuable cargo, purchased with the Fool's Pence he has talked out of the pockets of his lunatick audience. (1)

In partial fulfillment, at least, of the writer's prediction, Whitefield landed at Philadelphia. On his way back to his cure in Georgia the evangelist paid his first visit to Virginia, and was welcomed in Williamsburg by Commissary Blair. (2) The Gazette was able to carry in December a much more pleasing report than the London dispatch above:

> Williamsburg, December 21. On Sunday Morning last, the Rev. Mr. WHITFIELD preach'd at our Church, on these Words, What think ye of Christ? There was a numerous Congregation, and 'tis thought there wou'd have been many more, if timely Notice had been given of his Preaching. His extraordinary Manner of Preaching, gains him the Admiration and Applause of most of his Hearers. He is gone to Carolina, on his way to Georgia: And 'tis said he intends to be here again next April or May. (3)

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(1) Virginia Gazette, 29 September 1739.

(2) John Holt Rice, in the Evangelical and Literary Magazine, August 1819, 344,345, wrote an econium of James Blair containing this reference to Blair's reception of Whitefield: "...that he gave decisive evidence of freedom from high-church bigotry, by inviting Mr. Whitefield to preach, when on a visit to Williamsburg in the year 1748. Whitefield was one of the founders of the Methodist society, at least of a branch of that denomination. And although ordained by an English bishop, he was excluded from the pulpits of the church, it is believed, before his visit to America. Yet Blair believed him to be a good man and a useful preacher, and in the liberal spirit which ought to characterize every Christian, he opened his own pulpit for his use. For this let him have due commendation. ... May the example of his piety, his liberality, and public spirit find imitators among all denominations of Christians in our country!" As well as his inaccuracy in date, Rice was probably wrong in attributing Blair's invitation to a liberality that would defy the prevalent interpretation of Whitefield's preaching by the Church of England.

(3) Virginia Gazette, 21 December 1739. I have purposely kept the typography in this quotation. The issue before carried this short announcement: "This Evening the Rev. Mr. Whitfield arrived here, on his Way to Georgia. We hear he is to preach at our Church on Sunday; and on Monday he goes on his Journey." Whitefield recorded his reception in Williamsburg in his journal on 15 December

Once Whitefield visited a place, that became to him a part of his habitat, and those whom he knew there became his correspondents and friends. Williamsburg was to see Whitefield again, but in the meantime he left a visible reminder among his friends the Virginians. William Parks, printer and bookseller, advertised in the Gazette only two issues after Whitefield's visit:

> Next Wednesday will be Publish'd, The Indwelling of the Spirit, the Common Privilege of all Believers. A SERMON Preached at the Parish-Church of Bexly, in Kent, on Whitsunday, June 10, 1739, by GEORGE WHITEFIELD, A. B. of Pembroke College, Oxford. Publish'd at the Request of the VICAR, and many of the Hearers. Printed at London, and sold for the Benefit of the School-house now erecting for the Colliers in Kingswood, near Bristol. And now Re-printed and Sold by William Parks, in Williamsburg. Price stitch'd 7 1/2d. (1)

Parks was not a philanthropist, and he may well have had assurance that the volume he was reprinting would find a good market around Williamsburg and in other parts of Virginia where the Gazette was sold. Of the direct influence of this volumen in the dissenting movements in Virginia we can only guess, but it must be considered as having more influence than merely to incite interest in the preacher, assuring large crowds to hear him on his future trips through the Colony.

As we cannot trace the influence of this volume of sermons, neither can we see any direct influence of this visit upon the Hanover movement. Davies was told that the people there received word of his visit too late to travel the sixty miles to Williamsburg, but the inference is that they would have done so if notified in time; thus we must predicate a knowledge of his work by the fall of 1739, and at least a willingness to hear this preacher of experimental religion. (2)

1740 [?]: "Paid my respects to Mr. Blair, Commissary of Virginia. His discourse was savoury, such as tended to the use of edifying. He received me with joy, asked me to preach, and wished my stay were longer." Sprague, Annals, V, 9. In this and the following quotation I have retained the capitalization and italics of the original Virginia Gazette ar

[Notes continued to next page.]

The influence of Whitefield's visit in 1745 is recorded in many sources and was of great importance in the Hanover story, as the effect upon the direction of the dissenting movement was still dependent upon itinerant ministers. One of the best accounts of the preaching of Whitefield is an article in the Virginia Gazette by an unusually impartial witness. I feel justified in including this entire article as illustrative of Whitefield's preaching, which was so favored by the Hanover Dissenters; and for its anecdotes of the religious life in Hanover in these years before Davies' arrival. (3)

> Hanover, October 12, 1745. We have had Mr. Whitefield among us, who is beyond controversy a wonder of a man; he has a most easy way of delivering himself, and a great command of words, so that when in company, though he some times entertains with the trifling incidents of his travels, he hath (as I am informed) so good a knack at telling a story, that he deserved the name of an agreeable companion. His lady is likewise an affable well-bred woman, and appears to be between thrity and forty years of age. I was present at several of his sermons, which he delivered off hand, with all the graces of action and voice, and with all the success which an easy extempore delivery is apt to have with such as never saw anything like it before, or at least 'till of late. Such was the universal attention, when he preached at church in particular that tho' we were very much thronged, there was nothing to interrupt him, but every now and then a groan or sob from his hearers, and sometimes a cough, with which himself is very much troubled, that sometimes made us apprehensive that he would scarce be able to finish what he had to say to us, and, which I have since heard, he can hardly be prevailed with to take any thing for. One or two of his discourses made no great impression upon me, perhaps through my want of judgement; you may be better informed by those that have more; But the one he preached at church, left

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(1) Virginia Gazette, 4 January 1739 [1740].

(2) Foote, Sketches, I, 121. Morris gave the date as 1740.

(3) Virginia Gazette, 3 October 1745: "MR. WHITEFIELD arriv'd in HANOVER County last FRIDAY, and preach'd several Times to large Audiences."

various impressions on me; it was upon that sublime subject in the Revelations of St. John, I am Alpha and Omega; the Beginning and the Ending. He introduced his discourse with a thought, to me, most beautiful, and I confess altogether new; but I have found since, in conversing with those more read in divinity, that it is very commonly to be met with; his words were nearly these, When great potentates and princes would issue a decree or proclamation, they always either prefix or annex their titles, that by this means their authority may not be disputed: He prosecuted his discourse by a comment upon the words of the text, inferring from thence; that Christ ought to be our beginning and ending; the main drift and view of all our actions. He descended farther into particulars, and in speaking of prayer, used this remarkable expression, that the best prayer we ever made in our lives, deserved damnation; which at first shocked me, and which I confess I could not comprehend. And when he was (if I remember right) treating of regeneration, he had this unusual phrase: Christ (says he) first draws the outlines of the picture, then fills it up and illuminates it, and, after having stamped his own diving image on it, carries it and hangs it up in the dining room of heaven, to be admired by saints and angels: and when he found his congregation began to sigh and weep, he comforted them with this saying, That there was ne'er a poor bleating Lamb in the congregation which God would not take care of and have a regard for: Which I the rather take notice of, because I observed the people's grief was here more audible than before. Every body's discourse here, is about him; and as he is a man who has one time or other very much employed the thoughts of, and cut a great figure, in the world, every thing he says is with more than ordinary care treasured up; by which means we may perhaps, hereafter, be enabled to form a right judgementof the man. He refused (I hear) to preach in the Meeting-house here; and bid a man (who had a mind to have his child baptised by him) go to his parish minister; and when he seemed unwilling to do that, told him, 'Twas a silly scruple, and that this would be a means of bringing persecution on the people of God, and that not for righteousness sake either. I have been informed, that when he was giving (in private conversation) an account of his ordination, to those that were with him, he intimated, that he could not think he had a call to the ministry, 'til his friends insisted very hard on him, and chiefly 'til the bishop, who had a very great respect for him, pressed him to take orders, before the age at which others were usually admitted. He seems entirely void of the fear of death, and (I am told) in order to prove that, he related, that he had been known to have sung Psalms while a blister was cutting.

These, and probably other like expressions, which you may learn from those that heard him, exalt him in the eyes of some, but rather lessen him in the opinion of others; however, all in general have so much value for him, that they contributed handsomely towards his travelling expences, some putting in gold and others silver, according to their several abilities, the collection being made without his sollicitation: And if he is as sincere as he seems to be, he deserves to be rewarded for his pains: For, he that labours in the Gospel, must live by the Gospel. (1)

This vivid account of Whitefield's first visit to Hanover is augmented by the account which Patrick Henry wrote to the Commissary after Whitefield had preached there:

Mr. Whitefield lodged at a house in my parish Friday night...and the next morning the master of the house wrote me, that his guest was desirous to preach in the church the day following, if I would give him leave; my answer was in these words—(Please to tell Mr. Whitefield that if he will come to my house that I may have some conversation with him, I shall be able to determine whether or not it will be proper for me to allow him the use of my pulpit tomorrow.)

Mr. Whitefield did not come near me, nor heard I anything from him: Next day I set out for church and was told by the way that he was to preach either in the church or churchyard. I found a great multitude waiting for him at church, and after corsulting some of my friends, I thought it adviseable to give him leave to preach in the church, on this condition that he read the common prayer, etc., before sermon, which when he came he consented to do; and accordingly read prayers and preached. If I had refused him access to the church, he would have preached in the churchyard, or very near it, and there the whole congregation would have gone over to him, this was what I plainly foresaw as did also my friends; for tho the numbers of his followers there were but few, yet all the people to a man had a great desire to hear the famous Whitefield. And besides, as all our new-light men were present who [exclaim at our liturgy?] I thought that their great Apostle's using it, must infallibly silence them for ever on that subject.

These, Sir, were my chief reasons for allowing Whitefield to preach in the church, and I shall be extremely glad if you approve of them. (2)

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(1) Virginia Gazette, 24 October 1745. The writer indicates plainly that he is not a Dissenter himself, but does not take any of the bitter attitude shown by Patrick Henry in the following letter. The article is too long to retain the original capitalization and still be easily read.

(2) Patrick Henry to William Dawson, 14 October 1745, Dawson MSS.

Whitefield was not actively opposed by the clergy at the time of his first visit to Virginia, but by the time he returned for this visit in 1745 the Established Church had turned its back on him in all the Colonies. Henry's apology for allowing him to speak in his church is a typical example of the attitude taken within the Church to the minister who preferred the company of Dissenters to that of the clergy of his own communion. In 1744 Whitefield published in England a pamphlet in answer to the English bishops' Observations upon the conduct and behaviour of a certain sect usually designated by the name of Methodists..., and the Bishop of London alerted his Commissary in Virginia to be prepared to meet it. Even before the reply was printed (it was printed in both London and Boston in 1744) the Bishop sent a supply of the Observations to Dawson to be distributed. Of these pamphlets sent to Virginia the bishop wrote: "...[they] have had a good effect here, and I hope may do some good in the Plantations." (1)

If his own church shunned his preaching, the New-Lights of all denominations welcomed his ministry with rejoicing. In the Middle Colonies his closest friends were the zealous group of Presbyterian ministers associated with William Tennent and his sons. Through preaching to their congregations and travelling with them throughout the Colonies Whitefield definitely linked the revival in their churches with the world-wide movement, at the same time becoming the most honored evangelist among their people. In company with Gilbert Tennent he preached in New England. (2) He was received by high and low alike, yet opposed

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(1) There are two letters in the Dawson MSS from Edmund, Bishop of London to Commissary Dawson; one dated 6 September 1744, the other undated, but coming slightly before the other.

(2) A letter in the Whitefield Letters in the Library of Congress from one Henry Sherburne, Jr., dated 7 August 1747, very neatly expresses

at every turn by the conservative elements in all denominations. Governors and wealthy men sent their carriages to convey him from place to place, and crowds of hundreds rode with him for miles when he left their city.

It should not be thought, though, that he moved pleasantly from triumph to triumph in the midst of ease and acclaim. (1) Once he was nearly drowned while swimming his horse across the Potomac, and often he noted in his journal the howling of wolves around his camp at night. But he ceaselessly traveled up and down the seaboard in the Lord's work. He planned Negro schools to be established in Philadelphia and Virginia, but had to abandon the plan. He begged contributions everywhere for his orphanage in Georgia. More than any one man, he made of the Great Awakening in America a national, and international, movement. (2)

Despite his friendly relations with James Blair, and his correctness in sending Patrick Henry's parishioners to him for baptism according to custom, there was no note of general approval of his own church's clergy. Whitefield was not very charitable, to say

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the effect of this trip: "If you could come back again from Boston and spend a week or two with us it might be greatly blessed: like clinching a nail that has been drove... ."

(1) Leonard W. Labaree in his fine presentation of the conservative attitude toward the Awakening, ("The Conservative Attitude Toward the Great Awakening," 1 W(3) 331-352) gives the impression that Whitefield purposely avoided the frontiers. My impression is that he followed the roads for rapid transit but did not avoid rural areas, like Hanover, or pointedly to seek engagements in the cities.

(2) Illustrative of this linking process is a letter written by Davies' friend John Rodgers, long after he was denied admittance to Virginia,— written from St. Georges, Delaware, 4 July 1757: "The Word also runs and is indeed glorified in Virginia under Messrs. Davies, Tod, Wright, Martin and Henry, especially the first and last of these dear men of God." This letter is in the collection of Whitefield Letters in the Library of Congress.

the least, in his appraisal of the Anglican rectors in America when, somewhere en route from Pennsylvania to Georgia in 1740, he wrote the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel:

> It is too evident, that most of them are corrupt in their principles, and immoral in their practices, and many of them such as could not stand their trials amongst the Dissenters, or were discarded by them for their prophaness and irregularities. Our church seems to be their last refuge, so that it is almost become a common saying, that anything will make a church parson.
> . . . . . .
>
> If you had a mind only to establish the form of religion, sending such ungodly, despicable ministers, would render even that ineffectual. For tho' the Dissenters have lost much of the power of Godliness, yet they have enough left to shame us;... . (1)

Whitefield was not particularly vindictive, and the tenor of the letter quoted above was somewhat belied by his actions, which were often more considerate. In his relations with the Tennents he accurately noted:"...as far as I can learn, both he [William Tennent, Senior] and his sons are secretly despised by the generality of the synod." (2) Yet when Davies and Gilbert Tennent visited England and followed the advice of leading Dissenters not to openly ally themselves with him nor lodge with him, he apparently did not take the umbrage he might have and welcomed them when they came privately to visit him. (3)

Whitefield's particular contribution to the movement in Hanover has been noted, and his love for the New Light Presbyterian ministers who preached there served as an additional tie to that congregation.

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(1) Taken by itself this letter from Whitefield to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, in the Fulham Transcripts, might seem an unprovoked attack by one not noted for his tactfulness. But in A Sermon Preached Before the Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts... (London, 1748), by Samuel, Lord Bishop of St. Asaph's the editor announces on page six: "The Society desire their

friends in America to be so just to them, when any person appears there under the Character of a Clergyman of the Church of England, but his Behaviour disgraces that Character, to examine, as far as may be, into his Letters or Orders, and his name and circumstances, and to inspect the publick List of the Names of the Missionaries of this Society, published annually with the Abstract of their Proceedings; and the Society are fully pursuaded, it will appear that such unworthy Person is one, whom his own bad Conduct and desperate Fortune have brought thither, without the Knowledge of the Society: But if it should happen, that any such should come thither from them, they intreat their Friends in America, in the sacred Name of Christ, to inform them, and they will put away from them that wicked Person." In the original letter to which this note refers, a line was drawn through the word "common."

(3) Foote, Sketches, I, 244, quoting Davies' diary for 26 December 1753.

(2) Belcher, George Whitefield, 106.

IX.

THE REVEREND PATRICK HENRY.

* * *

Some of the clergy of the Established Church were vehement in their opposition to these young men [Davies and Rodgers]. One of the clergy of Hanover followed Messrs. Davies and Rodgers to Williamsburg, and complained that Mr. Rodgers had preached in the province without license, and demanded the rigorous enforcement of the law. From members of the Council he met encouragement: but from the Governor a rebuke--"I am surprised at you!--you profess to be a minister of Jesus Christ,--and you come and complain of a man,--and wish me to punish him for preaching the gospel! For shame, Sir! Go home, and mind your own duty. For such a piece of conduct, you deserve to have your gown stripped over your shoulders."

----William Henry Foote,
Sketches of Virginia,
I, 166.

On the eleventh of June 1737 the Reverend Patrick Henry became rector of St. Paul's Parish, Hanover County. The uncle of the future governor of Virginia (his namesake, who often signed himself "Patrick Henry, Junior") was born and educated in England. Around the year 1732 he came to Virginia where his brother John was successful in laying the foundation of a fortune and reputation. (1) The young minister was inducted into the parish of St. George, Spotsylvania County, in 1732, the same year the county seat was moved from Germanna to Fredericksburg and a church was built there.(2)

Little is known of the ministry of Patrick Henry in St. George Parish, but the background of the parish itself is worthy of note. Created in 1720, the parish and county contained one of the two notable groups of non-English settlers who were accorded special attention by the Colonial legislature. The Germans who worked Alexander Spotswood's iron mines were peasants and workmen from a section troubled with religious stress and turmoil. While there is no record of their being affected by the Pietist and Moravian movements in their homeland, that the influence of these movements,—European counterparts of the Great Awakening—, was not unknown in their religious thinking would be reasonable. I think it should not be ruled as impossible that Patrick Henry brought from this parish to his charge at St. Paul's Parish a firsthand knowledge of Enthusiasm and Dissent.

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(1) Henry was K.B. for Virginia 31 July 1732. On 26 March and 5 June 1735 Patrick Henry witnessed deeds in Hanover County. ("Records of Hanover County," [the "Small Book"], edited by S. O. Southall, 21 W(1) 59,60.)

(2) Meade, Old Churches, II-68.

From the vestry book of St. Paul's Parish we learn that Henry first preached in Hanover in May 1737, and at the meeting on 11 June 1737 he received a call to the parish. (1) Incidentally, at the same meeting his brother John was elected a vestryman. Little is said in any of the records, contemporary or recent, of this minister, nor have many of his letters been kept through which we may catch a glimpse of his personal life.

One characteristic of the rector of St. Paul's becomes apparent from the accounts of these years. He was contentious, high-tempered, and argumentative. From fewer accounts we learn that he was also jealous of his position, hasty in action, a leader and an active person rather than a quiet country parson. In 1746 or 1747 Henry began a long quarrel with his neighboring minister, Alexander White of St. David's Parish, King William, that led to personal recriminations, appeals to the Commissary, and threats of legal action. As this came in the midst of the Presbyterian revival in Hanover, it was very important in shaping the opinion of the Established Church and its clergy.

Whatever Henry's faults were in connection with this quarrel, and he certainly was not without blame to some extent, he seems to have had the interest of the Church sincerely at heart. In 1747 Henry wrote a letter to the Commissary in which he complained of White's action, and among other things that he had failed "to fill Brunskill's pulpit as promised, to go with a friend to clean out a boat." (2) The fact that

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(1) Vestry Book of St. Paul's Parish, 147, 148.

(2) Patrick Henry to William Dawson, 27 [21?] November 1747, Dawson MSS.

Henry had carried the complaint to the Commissary did not endear him to White. But to Henry keeping friendly relations with White was less important than trying to remedy a situation which was hurting both him and the Established Church. In writing the Commissary Henry put his finger on the sore spot of White's actions: "These things, I told you, but especially the last, gave offence to the Dissenters and all well disposed people who heard of it... ." (1) Of the truth of this charge there can be little doubt, and Henry insisted he had cautioned his neighbor against "certain actions which would be apt to open the mouths of the enemies... ." But there is certainly the element of jealousy, personal picque, and self-justification in the further complaint of the rector to his superior:

> I am sincerely desirous to promote the credit of religion, and the dignity of the officers thereof, and especially now, when the enemies of true and reasonable religion have their eyes upon us and do all they can to fasten reproaches upon all who promote true Christianity in opposition to blind enthusiasm... .
> . . . . . .
>
> [White] represented me as a very false man [from a statement White was reputed to have made at the Newcastle fair]...So that now, I have the new lights on one side, and Mr. White's companions the gamesters, etc [.,] on the other, throwing dirt at me, with great fury and no mercy."

To conclude his report to the Commissary, the rector begs him for aid, "rescuing me from the cruel treatment [especially] of Mr. White's party, who are the more outrageous... ."

It would be much easier to evaluate Henry's part in this quarrel if we could take at face value the letters of White to the Commissary. But even more so than in the case of the rector of St. Paul's it is

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(1) Patrick Henry to William Dawson, 27 [21?] November 1747, Dawson MSS. All quotations on this page are from this letter.

necessary to remember that White was writing to his superior who was not in close touch with the local situation, but who might cause serious trouble for him. Perhaps a different view of his position as a minister might protect the clergyman's letter from the suspicion of hypocricy when he wrote: "...when I must fall a sacrifice to his resentments. I confess, Good Sir, I am really sorry that such a thing should have happened; and I am unwilling to enter the lists with Mr. Henry, as a Brother: and more especially at this time, when there is such a defection from the Church, and particularly in his own parish..." (1)

This last malicious dig by the rector of St. David's should not be unduly credited as a statement of opinion current, but does indicate that there may have been some feeling among the clergy that Henry was in some measure responsible for the falling away of his parishioners into Dissent.

White professed to have been unable to explain to his people (upon his return from Williamsburg on a recent visit when he had talked with the Commissary) the truth in the quarrel "...as I could not do this, without touching upon Mr. Henry's character; this has convinced the world that he is really the man they took him to be and his being found out (I am sorry it was by me) to be a deceitfull man and accuser of the brethren [.] This has irritated him to such a degree, that he is all rage and fury; and threatened vengeance against me, and is resolved to expose me to all the world in the most uncharitable manner (How unbecoming a teacher of the Gospel of peace this is, I leave to you to judge.)... ." Touching the occurrences at the Newcastle fair, White wrote in the same

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(1) A letter from St. David's Parish, almost certainly from Alexander White, to Commissary Dawson, 9 [October?] 1747.

letter that although he desired to settle the quarrel then and there, Henry would not talk with him.

What transpired in their quarrel at the turn of the year we do not know, but it appears that Henry was upheld by the Commissary, for in February White wrote Dawson:

> "...for tho' his animadversions upon me are cruel and severe, yet when I consider from whence they came they do not make me at all uneasy...but for him to go and asperse my character behind my back, and to endeavor to render me little in your esteem; and at the same time to pretend the greatest friendship to my face, is such a piece of conduct as is scarce to be paralleled, and, I believe, none but himself would have been guilty of the like... ." (1)

But even if it appeared that spring a victory for Henry who "...seems to be in high spirits and thinks himself more than conquerer," the effects of the quarrel were not forgotten. White reminded Dawson "...I cannot soon forget his inhumane cruelty done to my character, upon my first setting out in the world... ." (2) The culpability of neither man is as important to this study as was the effect of their quarrel upon the Dissenters and those members of the Established Church who during these years joined them. (3)

Alexander White was not the only person with whom Henry quarreled, as his character as revealed in his letters would almost promise. The same year in which he was involved in this quarrel, and possibly bringing

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(1) Alexander White to William Dawson, 19 February 1748, Dawson MSS.

(2) From the letter quoted above. White had been ordained in 1745, and was licensed for Virginia 10 June 1745 (K.B. 12 June 1745) and was still rector of St. David's at the time of his death, about 1775. He was one of the ministers who sued for his salary under the "Two Penny Act."

(3) The solution also had its effect upon the Established Church. Elizabeth H. Davidson wrote: "...and in 1747 he [William Dawson] managed to bring about a peaceable settlement between the elder Patrick Henry and Alexander White, when the former was threatening to bring suit before a court of oyer and terminer." ("The Establishment of the English Church in Continental American Colonies," Historical Papers of the Trinity College Historical Society, Series XX, Durham, N. C., 1936, page 85.)

him into conflict with the "companions the gamesters" mentioned above, a new problem for the rector of St. Paul's arose when one George Purdie desired to be sent for England for orders and to return to settle in Hanover. Patrick Henry wrote the Commissary telling of the ignorance and bad character of Purdie, but at the same time contrary letters were written by certain Virginia merchants. (1) The scandalous conduct of that man after his ordination, and his dismissal for ill-conduct after outrageous actions in his two ministries at Lunenburg County's Cumberland Parish and St. Andrew's in Brunswick (between 1750 and 1760), would uphold Henry's appraisal of him. This development of events in the future, however, could not be called to witness in Henry's favor before his neighbors in Hanover in 1747. (2)

At the time all this was occuring Henry was fully aware of the danger to the Established Church of the New Light activity in his parish, and of the spread of Dissent in eastern Virginia. It may have been his long experience with Dissenters in his own and neighboring parishes, an experience probably greater and more keenly taken to heart than that of any other minister in the Colony, that stirred him to the initiative he took in the fight against those who were tolling the members away from the Established Church.

In 1745, when the discomforted John Thomson had come to the rector of St. Paul's Parish with his complaint of having been shut out of the

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(1) Patrick Henry to [William Dawson], 2 July 1747, Fulham Transcripts.

(2) Meade, Old Churches, I, 483, 477-8. Purdie may be recognized in letters quoted in this paper from Perry's Collections from his parishes even when he is not mentioned by name.

reading-house, Henry had written Commissary Dawson:

> He [John Thomson] is, in my opinion, a man of learning and good sense, a strenuous opposer of these new preachers and Whitefield, having published two small treatises against them (which I think are well performed) and I believe he is a man of piety and veracity, so that his information may be looked upon as true. (1)

It was probably the influence of Thomson's visit that inspired Henry to have John Caldwell's An Impartial Trial of the Spirit Operating in this Part of the World reprinted in Williamsburg to combat the growing influence of the New Lights. Nor was this the extent of the rector's activities. In December 1747 he was joined by a competent writer and ambitious clergyman from near-by Henrico Parish: "I informed you that the Revd. Mr. Stith proposed to concur with me in drawing up a petition to the governor and council concerning the itinerant preachers." (2) In a similar petition to House of Burgesses in 1751 Henry was joined by David Mossom, John Brunskill, John Robertson, and Robert Barrett. (3)

That Henry was successful to a point in his attempt to arouse churchmen to the danger of the spreading revolt from the Church , in his parish and in the Colony, can be seen in the opposition encountered by Davies for years after the Presbyterian Church was planted and flourishing in the eastern part of Virginia.

The Bishop of London wrote William Dawson in 1747: "I am sorry to find that the Methodists continue to be so troublesome among you; and

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(1) Patrick Henry to William Dawson, 13 February 1744/5, Dawson MSS. Sabin lists a treatise by Thomson in 1729 and two in 1741, all published in Philadelphia. It was probably the latter two that Henry referred to.

(2) Patrick Henry to William Dawson, 3 December 1747.

(3) Perry, Collections, I, 381-3. This is included in this paper as Appendix IV. John Robertson (K.B. 4 February 1745/6) was rector of St. James-Southam 1746-51 and of St. John's, King William, 1752-56. Robert Barrett (K.B. 5 December 1737) was rector of St. Martin's, Hanover and Louisa, 1754-87, probably earlier and later (this letter would indicate he was rector of St. Martin's as early as 1751).

I thank you and Mr. Henry for the pains you take in opposing them, and particularly for the wise and reasonable letter which you transmitted to me, as written by him." (1) The following year the Bishop of London again wrote his Commissary:

> I thank you for your copy of Mr. Henry's account of the Methodists; which is judicicusly written, and gives a clear and distinct view of their doctrines and practices; and shows, that Enthusiasm is in some respects carried to higher degrees there, than it is with us. The printed paper is a rational caution to those who are not already infected, against being seduced by them; but as to those who are already seduced, there is no <u>reasoning</u> with people, who have got it into their heads, that they think and act under the immediate guidance of the Spirit. (2)

The ministry of Reverend Patrick Henry in St. Paul's Parish is a factor in the decision to leave the Church made by some of his parishioners. He had been there long enough for them to know what type of Gospel he preached, and they rejected it. He was zealous in his care for the name of the Established Church, yet his zeal was mixed with personal feelings and without humility. His quarrels with his neighbors merely confirmed the New Lights in their belief that he was not an adequate pastor of his flock. Although he avoided the pitfalls of moral obliquity, he failed to attract by his Christian example. He cannot bear too large a share for the ministry he offered in fixing the responsibility for the Dissenters' decision, but he cannot be freed of fair share of that responsibility.

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(1) Edmund, Bishop of London to William Dawson, 19 June [July?] 1747, Dawson MSS.

(2) Edmund, Bishop of London to William Dawson, 28 February [?] 1748. Dawson MSS.

X.

THE PREACHING OF THE WORD.

* * *

Impressed with a sense of the truths he is about to deliver, a preacher disregards the applause or the contempt of his audience, and he insensibly assumes a just and manly sincerity. With this talent alone we see what crowds are drawn around enthusiasts, even destitute of common sense; what numbers converted to Christianity? Folly may sometimes set an example for wisdom to practice, and our regular divines may borrow instruction from even methodists, who go their circuits and preach prizes among the populace. Even Whitefield may be placed as a model to some of our young divines; let them join their own good sense to his earnest manner of delivery.

——Oliver Goldsmith, "On the English Clergy and Popular Preachers," The Works of Oliver Goldsmith, III, 210.

From the overwhelming evidence regarding the part it played in the dissatisfaction leading to the Great Awakening, some attention must be paid to the preaching of the day. Some idea of the difference in the sermons of the average pastor, and that of the Enthusiastics, can be gained from reading the printed sermons. But this is insufficient, as the manner of delivery played a great part in the effectiveness of preaching then as today. A contemporary account of the methods of preaching has been left us, fortunately, by a master. Oliver Goldsmith had an opportunity to compare the system of preaching in the Church of England with that heard among the Methodists. Possibly he attended services where Whitefield himself preached. His testimony is germane, and can be substantiated by dozens of scattered accounts in Virginia and the other Colonies, though none is so well written.

> Men of real sense and understanding prefer a prudent mediocrity to a precarious popularity; and, fearing to outdo their duty, leave it half done. Their discourses from the pulpit are generally dry, methodical, and unaffecting; delivered with the most insipid calmness; insomuch, that, should the peaceful preacher lift his head over the cushion, which alone he seems to address, he might discover his audience, instead of being awakened to remorse, actually sleeping over his methodical and laboured composition.
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> . . . . . .
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> This method of preaching is, however, by some called an address to reason, and not to the passions; this is styled the making of converts from conviction: but such are indifferently acquainted with human nature, who are not sensible, that men seldom reason about their debaucheries when headlong passion dictates; in all other such cases we should arm one passion against another: it is with the human mind as in nature, from the mixture of two opposites the result is most frequently mental tranquillity.

> Those who attempt to reason us out of our follies, begin at the wrong end, since the attempt naturally presupposes us capable of this, is one great point of the cure. (1)

From a less renowned, but no less graphic, pen comes a very telling indictment of the ministers of the Established Church in Virginia, and their pulpit manners. In the Virginia Gazette for 21 January 1737 is the following paragraph on story-tellers. Although it can never be established as fact, it is not stretching credulity too far to think that this piece was read with agreement by church-goers in St. Paul's and surrounding parishes:

> As for instance if one of these [story-tellers] be a preacher of God's Word, by far-fetched criticisms, numerous divisions, and sub-divisions, incoherent digressions, tedious repetitions, useless remarks, weak answers to strong objections, inferences to no premises, tedious exhortations, and many other methods of protraction, he shall draw you out a discourse for an hour and a quarter, unequally dispensing opium and edification to his flock, there being seven sleepers for one hearer.

It was just such preaching as this by James Blair, who was no inferior preacher, that caused William Byrd, who was no inferior critic, to write a few years earlier: "We rode to Jamestown Churdh where Mr. Commissary preached... . Nothing could hinder me from sleeping at church, though I took a great deal of pains against it." (2)

It was in such a time, when sermons were marked by arid logic and pedantic delivery, that the Great Awakening entered the Colony, borne by orators of flaming zeal. Jonathan Edwards could stir his New England congregation with his message despite his immobile

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(1) Oliver Goldsmith, "On the English Clergy and Popular Preachers," Works..., III, 208, 209.

(2) The Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover 1709-1712, 13 February 1709.

delivery and unmarked voice, but it was not Edwards who brought the New Light message to Virginia. From the appearance of George Whitefield and Gilbert Tennent, through the years of Davies' ministry, into the afterglow of James Waddell, the mark of the Enthusiastic preacher was his impassioned pulpit address. The printed sermons of Whitefield were considered, even in his lifetime, as inferior to those by many of the widely read divines. When the voice of the evangelist thundered the same sermons to an eager congregation of five or ten thousand listeners, though, the intensity of the preacher and the immediacy of the message stirred a community. It was this happy combination of message and delivery that gathered crowds of two and three thousand to hear Whitefield in the rural communities of Delaware, in Hanover, and in Williamsburg.—a feat that would be considered remarkable today, especially if the sermon could be heard. Yet to those on the outskirts of these vast crowds, sitting on their horses or the tops of their carriages, the voice of the evangelist carried, as the skeptical Benjamin Franklin was forced to admit. Nor was Whitefield alone in this field, for his associates, and particularly Davies and Tennent, preached under the same conditions with comparable results.

The manner of preaching by the New Lights was a welcomed change to many of the Dissenters in Virginia, but even more welcome was the content of the sermon. Despite the aversion felt by their detractors toward an emotional appeal in preaching, the deep conviction of the preachers necessitated a direct challenge to the concentrated attention of their hearers. This does not mean that the sermon was any less well

planned, as an attempt to outline one of the intricately constructed sermons of Davies' will show. It does mean that the calm talk on a selected religious topic which could lull William Byrd to sleep was discarded entirely by the New Lights. It means that the solemn content of the sermon, the rhetorical prowress of the minister, the quickly communicated emotional reaction of the congregation, and the intense conviction underlying the faith of both preacher and hearer completely changed the form and meaning of the church service.

Looking back on this period, the Reverend Horatius Bonar, editor of the 1845 edition of John Gillies' Historical Collections Relating To Remarkable Periods Of The Success Of The Gospel, described the preaching of the Awakening by portraying the ministers:

> They lifted up their voices, and spared not. There was no flinching, no flattering, or prophesying of smooth things. Perhaps they excelled more in the proclamation of the law, and its eternal penalties, than in the declaration of the glad tidings of great joy, through Him who finished transgression, and made an end of sin on the cross. There is sometimes a lack of fulness and liberty in their statements of the gospel; there is a constraint about some of their sermons, as if they feared making the glad tidings too free; there is, in their dealings with inquirers, a tendency to throw them in upon their own acts, or feelings, or convictions, instead of drawing them out at once to what has been finished on the cross, leading them to look for some preparatory work in themselves, before rejoicing in the gospel; but still there are at other times full exhibitions of the Saviour, and free proclamations of his glorious gospel. Their preaching seems to have been of the most masculine and fearless kind, falling on the audience with tremendous power. (1)

No account has been left of Patrick Henry as a preacher, but the monotonous manner in which David Mossom read his sermons, never lifting his eyes from the manuscript, was noted by those he bored

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(1) Horatius Bonar, in the preface to Gillies' Historical Collections... (Kelso, 1845), vi-xi, gives a lengthy description of both the ministers and their preaching.

with his reading. (1) It was the contrast in the manner of delivering sermons, and the language of the New Light sermons, which first attracted many listeners.

We have few descriptions of services in Hanover, and only a few more suggestions in Davies'letters and sermons. In addition to the article from Hanover reporting Whitefield's preaching there (quoted in the preceding chapter), we have a description of a service at Neshaminy, Pennsylvania, which can be taken as a fair example of such a service as he might have conducted in Hanover:

> About twelve o'clock, we came thither and found 3000 people gathered together in the meeting-house yard. Mr. Wm. Tennant, Jr., an eminent servant of Jesus Christ, because we stayed beyond the time appointed, was preaching to them. When I came up, he soon stopped; sung a psalm, and then I began to speak as the Lord gave me utterance. At first, the people seemed unaffected, but in the midst of my discourse, the power of the Lord Jesus came upon me, and I felt such a struggling within me for the people as I scarce ever felt before. The hearers began to be melted down immediately, and to cry much; and we had good reason to hope the Lord intended good for many. After I had finished, Mr. Gilbert Tennent gave a word of exhortation, to confirm what had been delivered. At the end of his discourse we sang a psalm, and dismissed the people with a blessing. (2)

Henry J. Ford, in his The Scotch-Irish in America, has pursued, perhaps too far, the theory that the Scotch-Irish preachers were responsible for changing the style of oratorical prose in America.

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(1) "...the parish minister was but a poor preacher—very unapt to teach or even to gain the attention of an audience. Being very near-sighted, and preaching wholly by a written copy, he kept his eyes continually fixed on the paper, and so near, that what he said seemed rather addressed to the cushion, than to the congregation. Except at a time, when he might have a quarrel with any body—then he would straiten up, and speak lustily, that all might distinctly hear." The Life of the Reverend Devereux Jarratt, ...Written by himself (Baltimore, 1806) 21,22.

(2) Joseph Belcher, George Whitefield...With Special Reference to his Labors in America (New York, 1857), 106.

Patrick Henry, nephew of the rector of St. Paul's Parish, was influenced by the ministry of the Presbyterian Church, to which his mother and sisters belonged during Davies' ministry in Hanover. George H. Bost, in his thesis on Samuel Davies, agrues convincingly from the similarity of both manner and ideas that the model set by Davies in the formative years of the patriot Henry's life (his eleventh to twenty-second years) was primarily responsible for Henry's form. (1)

It was this influence on Henry that caused Ford to write: "...the evidence points strongly to the fact that Davies was the founder of a school of oratory that profoundly affected forensic method in America,

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(1) George H. Bost, "Samuel Davies, Colonial Revivalist and Champion of Religious Toleration" (Typed Ph.D. Thesis, University of Chicago, 1942). Bost quotes from Samuel Davies' The Curse of Cowardice (London, 1758): Must peace then be maintained, maintained with our perfidious and cruel invaders, maintained at the expense of property, liberty, life, and everything dear and valuable? maintained when it is in our power to vindicate our right, and do ourselves justice? Is the work of peace then our only business? No; in such a time, even the God of Peace proclaims by his providence, "To Arms."

Again, from this sermon: "Religion and Patriotism": "And Virginians! Britons! Christians! Protestants! if these names have any import or energy, will you not strike home in such a cause?...Where are the friends of human nature? where the lovers of liberty and religion? Now is the time for you to come forth and show yourselves." Compare with Patrick Henry's: "Gentlemen may cry, peace, peace!—but there is no peace. The war is actually begun!...Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God."

In the accumulation of effect, compare this passage from the sermon "On the Defeat of General Braddock": "But what do I now see? Waht do I now hear? I see the brazen skies, the parched soil, the withering fields, the hopeless springs, and the scanty forests. Methinks I also hear the sound of the trumpet, and see garments rolled in blood; the frontiers ravaged by revengeful savages; the territories invaded by French perfidy and violence." Hear Henry's similar use of accumulation: "We have petitioned; we have remonstrated; we have supplicated; we have prostrated ourselves before the throne... . Our petitions have been slighted; our remonstrances have produced additional violence and insult... ." Bost's parallel passages start on page 236 of his thesis.

whether in the forum, in the pulpit, or at the bar." (1) Despite the uncertainty of determining the amount of influence Davies' preaching played on Patrick Henry, there can be no doubt about the effect it had on his congregation. For a young man, Davies was well known indeed for his pulpit oratory. His friend Samuel Finley said of his preaching:

> In the sacred Desk zeal for God, and love to men animated his addresses, and made them tender, solemn, pungent, and persuasive; while at the same time they were ingenious, accurate, and oratorical. A certain dignity of sentiment and stile, a venerable presence, a commanding voice, and emphatical delivery, concurred both to charm his audience, and overawe them into silence and attention. (2)

Even more enthusiastic, if less authoritatively based, is Ford's characterization of Davies' style: "The new style, which was in effect a personal harangue, was liable to serious defects. It admitted possibilities of rant and incoherence against which the older method guarded. Criticism on this score was directed against Gilbert Tennent himself. It appears to have been the special work of Davies and his successors to systematize the new method, imparting to it dignity and character and establishing its artistic canons. In so doing a distinctly American school of oratory was founded, whose best examples view with the finest passages of literature the world can furnish."(3)

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(1) Henry J. Ford, The Scotch-Irish in America, 391.

(2) Samuel Finley's "A Sermon on the Death of Mr. Davies," prefixed to Sermons on the Most Useful and Important Subjects, Adapted to the Family and Closet, (London, 1768; also other editions), xxxix. Compare Jarratt's description of Mossom with David Bostwick's of Davies: "With what majesty and grandeur, with what energy and striking solemnity, with what powerful and almost irresistable eloquence would he illustrate the truths, and inculcate the duties of christianity! Mount Sinai seemed to thunder from his lips, when he denounced the tremendous curses of the law, and sounded the dreadful alarm to the guilty, secure, and impenitent sinners." (Found in many editions of Davies' Sermons, in the 3d American edition, Boston, 1811, page 54,55)

(3) Henry J. Ford, The Scotch-Irish in America, 399. The author recognized, of course, the danger of the "tinsel rhetoric, affected emotion and pumped enthusiasm" which less capable speakers fell into.

The effect of this type of preaching on the people of Hanover may best be estimated by re-reading William Wirt's essay on the Blind Preacher (Davies' pupil, James Waddell) in The British Spy, or noting the witness of the writer of the letter from Hanover in the Virginia Gazette in 1745 quoted in the chapter on Whitefield.

There may be a tendency today to confuse the type of sermon preached by Davies with the extemporaneous exhortation of the revivalist, who, having a limited choice of themes (on all of which he has preached countless times), from the fullness of his heart on his subject has no conscious plan or even outline for his sermon. In the case of Davies, the sermons preached to the congregation at Hanover were the result of long hours of study and preparation. Davies stated that he never delivered a sermon on which he had spent less than four days in preparation; and at another time answered an inquiry about his preparation saying that he could not ask God to bless a sermon which had not cost him the utmost labor of which he was capable. (1)

In seeking the causes of the rejection of the Established Church by the Dissenters of Hanover, we cannot overlook their dissatisfaction with the sermons of their parish church. The satisfaction of the Dissenters with the theology contained in the printed sermons of Baxter, Flavel, Allaine and Whitefield could turn the pious to experimental religion, yet the pulpit oratory of the New Light ministers, and Whitefield on his visits to Hanover, drew many more to the Morris Reading-houses, and to the Presbyterian services.

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(1) Edward Mack, "Our Presbyterian Heritage in Eastern Virginia" (Union Seminary Review, separately printed in Richmond, 1924), 9. Many ministers and seminary students are learning that Davies' sermons will stand up well today when outlined and probed for construction.

XI.

THE PRESBYTERIANS.

* * *

There is one Gilbert Tennent lately a leading man in the Synod of Presbyterians in Pennsylvania, who, with one Mr. Freelenhausen a Dutch minister of Staten Island, had, several years before Mr. Whitefield appeared in America, preached some strange notions about religious matters, which some other younger preachers imbibed from them, but they had not authority enough to impose these notions upon the people, till Whitefield coming over joined them, and then their notions and opinions were everywhere published, and being espoused by Whitefield and his followers, became the current doctrines of that joint party; and at a meeting of the abovementioned Synod at Philadelphia in May 1741 this Tennent and eight more of the members openly declared their separations from the Synod, and have ever since that time continued to meet by themselves, to exercise a discipline of their own framing, and have ordained a good many young preachers, whom they send into all parts of America, to disturb the established churches of all denominations, requiring almost no other qualification in candidates for orders, than, what they call, experiences of a work of grace in their hearts: and the preachers who lately came into Hanover were three of those ordained by the Separatists abovementioned.

——Rev. Patrick Henry to Commissary William Dawson, 13 February 1745. Dawson MSS.

No date has been assigned to the building of the Morris Reading-houses. Apparently they were built shortly before, or in 1743. The Dissenters occupied a curious position, not knowing either their status before the law or their nature as a religious group. They had definitely separated themselves from the Established Church, yet they had no ecclesiastical government nor had they a defined system of theology. Their ideas of the Gospel in which they believed, and the application to their lives, they understood quite well. To all intents and purposes, though, it was home-made and not allied to any existing system.

Individually and in groups the Dissenters began to feel the force of the religious laws of the Colony and to incur its penalties. Charles Campbell has condensed the situation of the Dissenters in a short paragraph:

> Those who frequented them [the reading-houses] were fined for absenting themselves from church, and Morris himself often incurred this penalty. When called on by the general court to declare to what denomination they belonged, these unsophisticated dissenters, knowing little of any such except the Quakers, and not knowing what else to call themselves, assumed for the present the name of Lutherans, (unaware that this appelation had been appropriated by others,) but shortly afterwards they relinquished that name. Partaking in the religious excitement which then pervaded the colonies, limited in information and in the means of obtaining it, these unorganized dissenters became bewildered by discordant opinions. Some of them seemed to be verging toward antinomianism; and it came to be a question among them whether it was right to pray, since prayer could not alter the Divine purposes, and it might be impious to desire that it should. At length, Morris and some of his associates were summoned to appear before the governor and council at Williamsburg... . (1)

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(1) Charles Campbell, History of the Colony and Ancient Dominion of Virginia (Philadelphia, 1860), II, 439, 440. Campbell relied for most of his information on John Holt Rice's articles and Davies' letter (Morris' narrative) to Dr. Bellamy of New England as Rev. Moses Hoge, president of Hampden Sidney, "extracted" it for John W. Campbell's A History of Virginia... (Philadelphia, 1813) 290--310.

There is a story, which may well be apocryphal, that as the four men who were summonsed to Williamsburg were on their way they were overtaken by a storm. One of them, travelling by himself, took shelter in a house where he found a "dusty old volume" which, as he read it he learned, contained much of the doctrine they had evolved in the reading-houses. The owner gave him the volume, which he took to Williamsburg with him. When questioned by the Governor and Council as to their denomination they presented this book as their creed. It was the [Westminster] confession of faith of the Scotch Presbyterian Church. The Governor assured them they were Presbyterians, and a second terrific storm set the seal of approval on the choice as the Council was overawed. Although the proof for this incident is scant, it has persisted and gives a basis for the congregation's sending to Cub Creek to have the visiting Presbyterian missionary there brought to Hanover to preach to them. (1)

II.

William Robinson, whom we noted in the chapter on the Great Awakening, offered himself as a candidate for the ministry before the Presbytery of New Brunswick 1 April 1740. The following year, on the twenty-seventh of May, he was licensed, and on 4 August 1741 he was ordained by the Presbytery sine titulo. (2)

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(1) This narrative is apparently based primarily if not solely on the account given by Rev. James Hunt in 1792. Hunt's father was one of the "four men," and probably the one alluded to here. James Hunt himself (who was later the teacher of William Wirt) was believed by the author to have witnessed most of the events told, being converted by Robinson. The account is given in "Origin of Presbyterianism in Virginia," in the Evangelical and Literary Magazine, II (1819), 345-353. Moses Drury Hoge, in The Planting of Presbyterianism in Kentucky One Hundred Years Ago (Louisville, n.d. [c1883]) said of this account: "This incident should be be put upon permanent record. Its significance is found in the fact that intelligent men, sincere inquirers for the truth, from the study of the Bible, and such negre assistance as their little library afforded, had unconsciously been led to the adoption of the doctrines contained in the Presbyterian Confession of Faith." (13) John Holt Rice believed that Davies had omitted this from his account to save Gooch embarrassment.

On 2 June 1741 and again on 29 May 1742 petitions were received by New Brunswick Presbytery from "James River in Virginia" beggingfor a minister to be supplied them. (3) That winter Robinson was appointed by the Presbytery to make a trip to Virginia and the Haw River in North Carolina in response to petitions they had received. On his way to Caldwell's settlement on Cub Creek (in what is now Charlotte Prince Edward County) Robinson was arrested by the sheriff of Orange County as an itinerant. For some unexplained reason the sheriff released him before bringing him to Williamsburg, and the young minister went on his way unmolested.(4)

There are two narratives, either conflicting or unrelated, which tell how Robinson was led to come to Hanover to preach. According to Robert Howison's history: "In 1743, a member of one of the Augusta congregations crossed the Blue Ridge to barter his grain for iron and salt. Meeting with some of Morris's hearers, he conversed with them, and was astonished to find that their views of religion coincided with his own. He advised them to send to the Valley, and invite a preacher whom he had left there, to come and preach to them." (5) The other story states that young people from the Hanover dissenting families were visiting friends in Cub Creek and heard Robinson. Recognizing his teachings as those confessed by the Dissenters at home they informed their parents, who sent two men to persuade him to come to Hanover and

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[Notes continued from preceding page.]
(2) George H. Ingram, "History of the Presbytery of New Brunswick," 7 J 143, 145; Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit, III, 93.

(3) Ingram, "History of the Presbytery of New Brunswick," 7 J 149, 223.

(4) Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit, III, 93.

(5) Robert R. Howison, A History of Virginia (Richmond, 1848), 175, 176. Howison is drawing on R. Davidson's History of the Presbyterian church in the State of Kentucky; with a preliminary sketch of the churches in the Valley of Virginia (New York, 1847), 31, 32.

preach to them. They missed the missionary at Cub Creek, but rode after him and overtook him. (1) James Hunt's narrative indicates clearly the difficulties which the congregation had already encountered in the matter of doctrine, and the delegates were instructed to hear him preach before inviting him to come.

> [They heard Robinson, and] on consultation, were divided in opinion. One thought that he was, in his preaching, entirely evangelical; the other, who was verging to the licentious extreme...thought he dwelt too much on the necessity of works, and that thereby he at least clouded the doctrines of grace, and threw a veil over the glories of divine sovereignty in the salvation of man. But as they could not agree between themselves, it was determined that they should give him a cordial invitation in the name of the congregation, and if he would go to let the people judge for themselves.(2)

The Reverend William Hill, who preached in this section in the closing years of the eighteenth century but who knew many of the people from these congregations, left this anecdote about Robinson's arrival in Hanover. Robinson stopped at a tavern eight or ten miles from Hanover on the night before he was to preach. The tavern keeper was a very profane man and Robinson ventured to reprove him for his profanity. The host was sarcastic in asking Robinson's reason for the reproof, and surprised to learn he was a minister. "It is said Mr. Robinson had had the small pox very seriously, which had given him a very rough visage, and deprived him of the sight of one of his eyes." Robinson offered as proof an invitation to hear him preach the next day. This the host accepted on condition that Robinson preach on a subject he proposed.

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(1) Miller, Life of John Rodgers, 38.

(2) James Hunt's narrative in "Origin of Presbyterianism in Virginia," Evangelical and Literary Magazine, II, 351.

The text chosen by the sceptic was the passage from Psalms: "For I am fearfully and wonderfully made." Robinson considered this fair, and agreed to preach on it. "The man was at Mr. Robinson's meeting, and that text was the theme of one of his sermons. Before it was finished, the wicked man was made to feel that he was a monster, and that he was fearfully and wonderfully made. It is said that he became a very pious and useful member of the church; and it is thought Mr. Davies alludes to this instance when he says, 'I have been the joyful witness of the happy effects of those four sermons upon sundry profligates, who have ever since given good evidence of a thorough conversion from sin to holiness!'" (1)

The account of Robinson's first sermon is one of the most revealing incidents, both psychologically and repertorially, left recorded:

> At the appointed time Mr. Robinson came. He had been obliged to ride the whole of the preceding night in order to avoid disappointing the people. When he arrived at the Reading-house, they were assembled in crouds [sic], waiting for the preacher. On his appearance a scene ensued which marked at once the conscientiousness and the simplicity of the parties on both sides. Mr. Morris and his friends, though they had heard a high character of Mr. Robinson from their children and others, thought proper to be more certain as to his testimonials and his creed, before they suffered him to address the congregation which had assembled. They, therefore, took him aside, while the people waited, and not only requested to see his testimonials, which were ample; but also proceeded to examine him as to his views of the leading doctrines of the Gospel. To this Mr. Robinson submitted, not only with meekness, but with affection; and having entirely satisfied his examiners, he went into the house and began to address the people. (2)

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(1) Foote, Sketches, I, 131.

(2) Miller, Life of John Rodgers, 39. This author states that is was only after Robinson had preached there, and explained the reason for his adherance to his denomination, that the Hanover group assumed the name of Presbyterian. They then connected themselves with Newcastle Presbytery, the nearest church court, "and ever afterwards called themselves Presbyterians." (41,42).

Robinson preached for four days in Hanover, during which time he endeavored to correct the faults in doctrine that were already threatening to split the group. He instructed them in the methods of praying used by Dissenters (Morris assures us that before this no one had attempted extemporaneous prayer, all having been brought up in the Church of England and accustomed to the Book of Common Prayer), the singing of hymns, and other forms of congregational worship. Strangely enough, none of the several accounts tells at what stage a session was erected in the congregation. To what extent Robinson carried his organisational program we can only speculate. But there seems to have been no question from that time forward that the society which had gathered in the reading-houses would be transformed into a Presbyterian congregation (or congregations).

When Robinson prepared to leave the people presented him with a sum of money to cover his travelling expenses. Although he assured them he was in no need of it (apparently being fairly independent in means, as was Makemie), they insisted that it was an offering and that they could not well disperse it again. He very aptly argued that one reason for his refusal to accept the money was "that the enemies of the cause of religion might, should he receive it, endeavor to represent him as a mere mercenary, and thus wound and injure the infant flock; but ...[also] he wished to preach without being burdensome to those among whome he went preaching the gospel." (1) When they insisted, and according to at least

(1) James Hunt's narrative in "Origins of Presbyterianism in Virginia," Evangelical and Literary Magazine, II, 352. John Holt Rice also recounts this tale in "Memoir of the Rev. Samuel Davies," page 116 of the same volume. Of the two accounts Rice says in a footnote: "We received it from an old lady, who in her youth heard the story. It is entirely likely that Mr. Hunt's recollection was more accurate than hers." (353).

one account placed the money in his saddle-bags without his knowledge, he agreed to take the money for the use of "a young man of my acquaintance of promising talents and piety, who is now studying with a view to the ministry... ." The money was applied to that young man's education, and James Hunt dramatically concludes the narrative: "The poor young man completed his education, much sooner than he could have done without that seasonable and providential aid. And when licensed, was immediately, on Mr. Robinson's motion, directed by Presbytery to visit Hanover county in Virginia. The stranger came, and, lo! it was the great Samuel Davies!! You, and the world know the sequel." (1)

III.

Robinson's organisation was sound, and probably helped to preserve the group, both from schism and opposition from without. The driving force in the group was still, however, the original search for a more satisfying personal religious experience which had led to the dissent rather than the guidance of the Presbyterians. The group repeatedly requested the newly erected Newcastle Presbytery to send them a minister, or at least visiting evangelists. Between 1743 and 1748 the Presbytery supplied missionaries as often as they could.

The next minister after Robinson to come from the Middle Colonies was the Reverend John Blair. Educated at Fagg Manor at the school of his brother Samuel Blair, the young minister was considered a highly qualified man in his profession, and probably merited the high praise

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(1) James Hunt's narrative in "Origin of Presbyterianism in Virginia, Evangelical and Literary Magazine, II, 352-3. Robinson was not able to return to Virginia. His health broke down, and after a very short ministry he died 3 August 1746, leaving his library to Davies. There is a sketch of Robinson in Sprague's Annals of the American Pulpit, III, 92-95, and Foote has a sketch, primarily on his Virginia ministry in Sketches, I, 124-132.

paid him by writers partisan to the Awakening. (1) Samuel Morris tells of his ministry there, giving us an insight into the character of the congregation in this incident: "One night in particular, a whole housefull of people was quite overcome with the power of the word, particularly of one pungent sentence; and they would hardly sit or stand or keep their passions under any proper restraints. So general was the concern, during his stay with us, and so ignorant were we of the danger of apostasy, more being brought to Christ at that time, than now appear to have been, though there is still the greatest reason to hope that several bound themselves to the Lord... ." (2)

Some time after Blair's return to the North, the Presbytery of Newcastle sent the Reverend John Roan on a similar mission. More concrete evidence remains of the visit of Roan than of any other predecessor of Davies. Roan, like Gilbert Tennent, John Thomson, Samuel Finley, John and Samuel Blair, and so many others in the ministry of the Presbyterian Church at the time, came from Ireland as a youth and studied at William Tennent's Log College. After his ordination by Newcastle Presbytery Roan preached and taught a grammar school at Neshaminy, Pennsylvania. (3)

In the winter of 1744 the Presbytery of Newcastle sent Roan on a missionary trip to Virginia. He was gladly welcomed in Hanover, and stayed there for some time, preaching and continuing the extension and organizational activities of the congregation founded by Robinson.

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(1) Particularly the account by Foote, in Sketches, I, 133. I feel that Foote drew heavily on his appraisal of the case, rather than on records in describing Blair's reception and impression in Hanover. Blair was later Vice-President and Professor of Theology at Princeton.

(2) Foote, Sketches, I, 133.

(3) Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit, III, 129-30. Miller in his life of John Rodgers stated that Rodgers attended Roan's school in 1741.

The wisdom of Newcastle Presbytery in sending Roan to Hanover might well be questioned. One of two possibilities presents itself as an explanation of the unhappy result of Roan's visit —unhappy, that is, with respect to the difficulties to be experienced by the struglling congregation for years to come as a result of the fiery evangelist's ministry. Quite probably the Presbytery did not realize fully the precarious position of the dissenting congregation in a situation distinctly different from that of the Presbyterian churches in the Middle Colonies, even those of the separated presbyteries. The impression is forced on one, although never stated in specific terms, that the split in the Hanover congregation between the moderate and radical wings of the believers was well defined in these years. This division was probably less over theology (although the accounts explicitly mention the point of doctrine of works or grace, and of interference with God's plan through prayer) than it was over the moral content of the Christian message and emotional reaction to the Gospel. Everywhere the evangelical movement was plagued with the people who flocked into the churches, claiming great piety and election but proceding to a license of conduct which neither their opponents nor their sincere co-religionists could reconcile with the way of life taught by Christ. There can be no doubt from contemporary accounts from Hanover that this feeling existed among numbers in this congregation. This element was strengthened by Roan's preaching. This does not imply that Roan was guilty of preaching false doctrine or incouraging immorality,—but the rashness and intemperate language of his preaching matched that already used by the fanatical members of the group. At the risk of not bearing out the conclusions of

other writers on the Awakening (but only because no one has thoroughly investigated this aspect), I venture to place Samuel Morris, as well as Thomas Green, and Roger Shackleford, in this wing of the congregation, and probably at the head of it. Under no circumstance would I have this construed to mean Morris was guilty of, or countenanced, immorality or any but truly evangelical zeal. That he was the leader of a faction, however, is clearly indicated in all accounts, and the court records and the letters of Patrick Henry, —which, biased as they are, specifically mention the stand he took on immoderate and radical tenets of the revival. It is more difficult to define the position and leaders of the other wing of the congregation, but from the very omission of their names from the sources, and the pronounced statements and action of their sons, it seems quite logical that the father of James Hunt and of David Rice were prominent members of that side.

The second possibility for the notoriety given Roan's visit is that we have more, and fuller, accounts of his ministry in Hanover than we have of the other evangelists between 1743 and 1748. Patrick Henry was aroused and alarmed before Roan's arrival, as were his neighbors in surrounding parishes. The indictment of Roan and the Hanover Presbyterians picked out for trial, even though they were not convicted, left descriptions and terms that cannot be overlooked by those writing on this revival. It is safe to assume that Roan used few arguments that had not been heard in Hanover already. His preaching and conversation from recorded bits extant are no more bitter or denunciatory than that of John Thomson and Patrick Henry against the New Lights. With no record of the activity of other ministers, and the unavoidable indictment of Roan on record, the glossing over accorded other principals of the movement is

denied him, to a large extent. The account in Sprague's Annals of the American Pulpit is as politely worded as truth will allow:

> He preached with great effect in Hanover, and the neighbouring counties; and many in different places were awakened and hopefully converted through his instrumentality. He was bold, evergetic, earnest, but had less of caution and prudence than the peculair circumstances in which he was placed, required. He inveighed against the clergy of the Established Church with great freedom, charging them not only with neglect of their official duties, but with gross moral delinquencies. His offensive statements and scathing satire quickly attracted the attention of the parish clergy and their friends; and they resolved that he should no longer be tolerated. (1)

How just the charges against Roan were we do not know, as the trial failed to bring forth the testimony hoped for by those who would have liked to have seen the Presbyterian congregation dispersed by law. The account of the court record is laconic: "The said defendants by their attorneys respectively say that they are not guilty in manner and form as in the said information against them alleged and of this they severally put themselves upon the country--and the Attorney General of our Lord the King, likewise." (2) What the Attorney General actually said when the verdict was not found against them is not recorded, but later records show that he very likely said it with less than satisfaction. The indictment by the Governor might well have disturbed the Dissenters, and his recorded proclamations and letters during the next year are in the same tenor. The one act at this time of which we know that bears out the tolerant and open attitude of Gooch's noted in all contemporary accounts was the "kindly welcome" given

Gilbert Tennent and Samuel Finley as

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(1) Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit, III, 133-142. Foote's account given in Sketches, I, 133-142 is even more mild.

(2) Foote, Sketches, I, 142.

representatives of the Presbyteries of New Brunswick and Newcastle. The impression given the reader is that Gooch employed a diplomatically strict attitude in his official documents, and an equally diplomatic humaneness in interpreting them in face to face interviews.(1)

No one seeking evidences of true Christian piety in the Colonial records can accord full sympathy to either side in this trial. Censoriousness, ridicule, and a possibly not genuine piety were undoubtedly true charges, as were several of the irregularities listed by the Governor in his charge to the Grand Jury in April. But that Roan and the others were guilty of the specific charges brought against them appears to have been false, for there was no lack of willingness in Williamsburg to end in this conveniently legal manner a movement that was becoming unpleasant. Morris' account of the trial is more satisfying, if less technically dependable, than the court record quoted above: "Six witnesses were cited to prove the charge against Mr. Roan, but their depositions were in his favour; and the witness who accused him of blasphemy, when he heard of the arrival of Messrs. Tennent and Finley, fled, and has not returned since, so that the indictment was dropped." (2)

With the failure to convict Roan, the Morrises and others, the official opposition to the Presbyterian congregation was apparently dropped until Davies' visit in the spring of 1747 aroused their opponents to renewed action. Even without a minister the movement did not collapse,

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(1) This charge, delivered 18 April 1745, is quoted in full as Appendix V. The charge, presentment and letters exchanged with the Synod of Philadelphia are necessary to an understanding of either the relationship between the two branches of the Presbyterian Church, or of Gooch's ambiguous role in the affairs of the Hanover New Lights.

(2) Foote, Sketches, I, 142.

which is probably the greatest testimony to its genuine vitality. For at least four years a religious movement of evangelistic zeal flourished under local and untrained leadership. Sporadic aid from strangers which introduced strange orgazinational and ritualistic forms was not an unmixed blessing. It spurred the authorities to retributive action, an ever-present threat the officials were not enept at raising by themselves.

The month following Roan's indictment, Morris and three other men from the Hanover congregation went north to the joint meeting of the Presbyteries of New Brunswick and Newcastle. Although the small number of ministers in the severed branch of the Church prevented their sending a regular minister to Hanover in answer to the request of that congregation, they took the same action their erstwhile brethren of the Synod of Philadelphia took that same month,—they sent a message to Governor Gooch explaining their action and asking his favor. Unfortunately this letter and reply to the Presbytery are not retained, as are those of the Synod, but their success seems to have been as great.

Gilbert Tennent and Samuel Finley were chosen to take the message to Gooch. If the choice of messengers was known to the conservative branch of the Church there must have been men who feared for their reputation. The long-lived strife between Gilbert Tennent and John Thomson, now minister of the Old Side church in Amelia County, was as well known to all as was the persuasive power of Tennent's preaching and conversation. If not as prominent as Tennent, Samuel Finley was not without his own share of fame in the Church.

Samuel Finley was born in County Armagh, Ireland, but unlike some of his brethren he was given as good an education as his parents could afford,

which seems to have been respectable. He came to America in 1734 at the age of nineteen. It is presumed that he studied for the ministry at William Tennent's Log College, and was licensed in 1740, before the split in the Church, and was ordained 13 October 1742. (1) In turn he, too, established a Log College at Nottingham, Maryland, and among the most noted of his pupils were Benjamin Rush and his brother Jacob, Ebenezer Hazard, James Waddell, John Bayard, and Governor Henry of Maryland. (2)

It is easier to judge Finley's ability at this time than it is to recover a true estimate of his character. At the time the parties of the Church were stirred up by John Thomson's Doctrine of Conviction Set In A Clear Light (1741), Finley was among those who published refutations, and marked himself as opposed to Thomson and his party. A partisan of the conservatives is quoted as describing Finley as "noted for his fondness for controversy, and the use of bitter invective... . He called Thomson and others of the Old Lights the set of priests whom Christ damned for their fastings, prayers, and alms...diabolical reasoners...ministers of Satan." (3) Yet those who knew him intimately formed an entirely different picture of him. Ebenezer Hazard may have had an older and wiser Finley in mind when he wrote his description of him, but it agrees with the other estimates of his contemporaries:

> He was remarkable for sweetness of temper, and politeness of behaviour. He was given to hospitality: charitable without ostentation; exemplary in the discharge of all relative duties;

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(1) Ingram, "History of the Presbytery of New Brunswick," 7 J145, 146, 228.

(2) There is a sketch of Finley in Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit, III, 96-101.

(3) John G. Herndon, "The Reverend John Thomson," 20 J 146.

> and in all things showing himself a pattern of good works. As a divine, he was a Calvinisht in sentiment. His sermons were not hasty productions, but filled with good sense and well digested sentiment, expressed in language pleasing to men of science, yet perfectly intelligible to the illiterate. They were calculated to inform the ignorant, to alarm the careless and secure, and to edify and comfort the faithful. (1)

Taking either estimate as true, the prospect facing the opponents of the Hanover revival was the same. Nor was the Presbytery mistaken in its choice of messengers, for they not only completed their errand with apparent success, but also obtained permission to preach in the Hanover meeting-houses.

Finley's companion, Gilbert Tennent, we have already noted in his relationship to George Whitefield. "As to his person, he was taller than the common size, and every way proportionable. His aspect was grave and venerable; and though at first view he seemed distant and reserved, yet upon a nearer acquaintance, he was ever found to be eminently affable, condescending, and communicative. And what greatly endeared his conversation was an openess, and undisguised honesty, at the greatest remove from artifice and dissimulation, which were the abhorrence of his soul while he lived. ... A loose great-coat, girt about him with a leathern girdle, was the dress in which he commonly went into the pulpit; and which, in connection with his large stature, grave aspect, and undrest natural hair, gave him the appearance of much dignity and simplicity." (2)

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(1) Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit, III, 101. When Davies was nominated as president of Princeton he withdrew in favor of Finley. Although Davies was finally chosen, Finley followed him in that office, and preached and published Davies' funeral sermon. He was the second American Presbyterian divine to be honored with the degree of Doctor of Divinity by the University of Glasgow. "Mr. Finley was a man of small stature, round face, and ruddy countenance. In the pulpit he was always solemn, and sometimes glowing with fervor. He possessed great knowledge of the human heart, and was remarkable for sweetness of temper, politeness and generosity." Foote, Sketches, I, 143.

(2) A biographical sketch of Gilbert Tennent by Samuel Finley in an article on Tennent in The General Assembly's Missionary Magazine (Philadelphia), I (1805), 238-248.

Tennent was by 1745 known through the Colonies from Virginia north, and was considered the leader of the New Light movement by many —of the separated Presbyterian Church, by all. He had been the most prominent in agitating for the withdrawal from the Synod of Philadelphia, a move he had now regretted for many years. He wrote his friend Jonathan Dickinson of Elizabethtown, N. J.:

> I have had many afflicting thoughts about the debates that have subsisted for some time in our Synod; I would to God the breach was healed! if it was the will of the Almighty. As for my own part, wherein I have mismanaged in doing that which I did look upon to be a duty, I should be willing to acknowledge in the openest manner; I can't justify the excessive heat of temper which sometimes has appeared in my conduct: I have been of late since I returned from New England visited with much spiritual desertions, temptations and distresses of various kinds, coming in a thick, almost continued succession which have given me a greater discovery of myself than I think I ever had before: These things with the trials of the Moravians have given me a clearer view of the danger of everything that tends to Enthusiasm and division in the visible Church...'tis a shame that the ministers who are in the main of sound principles, of religion should be dividing and quarrelling; alas for it! my soul is sick of these things; I wish that some Scriptural methods could be fallen upon to put an end to these confusions; some time since I felt a disposition to fall upon my knees, if I had the opportunity, to entreat them to be at peace. (1)

Even more distressing to Tennent than this frank avowal to his friend of the error of his early enthusiasm, was the manner in which his intemperate Nottingham sermon (The Danger of an Unconverted Ministry, Considered in a sermon on Mark vi. 34. Published in Philadelphia, 1740),

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(1) Gilbert Tennent to Jonathan Dickinson, dated New Brunswick, 12 February 1741. In a previous footnote I have explained that this letter is taken from a typewritten copy in a sales catalogue, and I do not know its present location.

The Rev. Jobham Sewall wrote William Sprague of an incident told by Waddell. In the later years of their long friendship, and many years after the Hanover revival, Waddell criticised Whitefield for something he thought inconsistent in Whitefield's early preaching. Whitefield replied, "Young Whitefield said and did many things that old Whitefield is ashamed of." Annals of the American Pulpit, V, 108.

which made the split in the Church inevitable, was flung back in his face in London at a time when he would have been most happy to have had it forgotten. (1)

These were the two men chosen by Presbytery to carry a message to Governor Gooch, and to preach in Hanover. Roan had completed his mission and returned to his congregation in the North. It may well be that the opposition he aroused prompted him to leave earlier than he had planned, knowing that his attacks on the Established Church had endangered the Hanover congregation. It is more likely that he completed his mission and departed with no knowledge of the impending suits. The charge has been brought by later writers, particularly less judicious evaluations in recent years, that Roan fled leaving Morris and his friends holding the bag. This is not only entirely without factual basis, but entails an intentionally biased disregard of the chronology of events in the spring of 1745.

When Henry wrote his letter to the Commissary on 13 February 1744/5 he spoke of "...Roan, who preached in Hanover about Christmas last..." and indicates that Roan had been gone some time before Thomson arrived on the first of February. Although this letter clearly outlines the

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(1) Davies records in his diary on 22 January 1754: "We went to Mr. Chandler's, with the design to submit our petition to his correction. We found Mr. Slaughter and Mr. Smith there, when we introduced the conversation about the Germans, and observed that our College would be a happy expedient to unite the Calvinists among them with the English Presbyterians. Mr. Smith replied that a union would not be desirable; for a separation would keep up a balance of power. Mr. Tennent answered, that an union in a good thing is always desirable. Upon which Mr. Chandler says, "I have seen a very extraordinary sermon against union," and he immediately reached Mr. Tennent his Nottingham Sermon. It threw us both into confusion, and gave a damp to my spirits, as brought me in mind of my mortifications in the General Court in Virginia." Foote, Sketches, I, 248.

charges against Roan, there is no hint of the formal indictment. It is entirely probable that the charge burst from a clear sky upon the Hanover congregation in April, and even more probable that Henry would have alluded to it had it been either known or clandestinely prepared in February. (1)

After delivering their message to Governor Gooch, and receiving a friendly reply from him, Tennent and Finley rode to Hanover where they stayed for about a week, preaching and encouraging the disturbed congregation. (2)

After this pair left Hanover there was another period in which the laymen continued their services of reading and leading the worship service. That same spring Newcastle Presbytery sent two other ministers to visit the congregation --this time sending William Tennent and Samuel Blair. Perhaps they had been scheduled to make their visit much earlier, for Patrick Henry wrote in February: "I am told that there are two or three of these Enthusiastic preachers expected in Hanover next month, to administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; I wish they could be prevented, or at least, ...[obliged] to show their credentials, for they may be Jesuits for [anything?] we know." (3)

Whether the meeting of Presbytery and the mission of Gilbert Tennent and Finley postponed the original plan we do not know, but when William Tennent and Samuel Blair arrived they conducted the first Presbyterian communion service in Hanover. (4) Morris described it in his narrative

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(1) See Appendix III.

(2) Foote, Sketches, I, 141

(3) This rather absurd statement is also taken from the letter in Appendix III.

(4) There seems to have been a penchant for collecting tavern stories based on the theme of the unrecognised minister. In a little tract called

to Samuel Davies:

> They administered the Lord's supper amongst us; and we have reason to remember it as the most glorious day of the Son of Man. The assembly was large, and the novelty of the manner of administration did peculiarly engage their attention. It appeared as one of the days of heaven to some of us; and we could hardly help wishing with Joshua we could have delayed the revolution of the heavens to prolong it. (1)

By now the members of the Hanover congregation were becoming acquainted with many of the most active members of the evangelical branch of the Presbyterian Church in the Colonies. William, younger brother of Gilbert, had been trained in his father's school at Neshaminy, and was for forty-two years pastor of the church at Freehold, New Jersey. "More than six feet high, of a spare thin visage, erect carriage, bright piercing eye, with a countenance grave and solemn, he was always cheerful, and won youth to seek his conversation....He preached with indescribable power, in a manner peculiar to himself, and seldom failed to interest and impress his audience. Of scrupulous integrity, independent mind, and an uncommonly clear perception of human character, he was a noted peace maker." (2)

Life of the Rev. William Tennent..., [no author], (Hartford, 1845), is this anecdote: "The late Rev. Mr. S. Blair and Mr. Tennent were sent by the synod on a mission into that province [Virginia]. They stopped one evening at a tavern for the night, where they found a number of guests with whom they supped in a common room. After the table was cleared, our missionaries withdrew from it. Cards were then called for, and the landlord brought in a pack and laid them on the table. One of the gentlemen very politely asked the missionaries if they would not care to take a cut with them, not knowing that they were clergymen. Mr. Tennent very pleasantly answered, "With all my heart, gentlemen, if you can convince me that thereby we can serve our Master's cause, or contribute anything toward the success of our mission." This drew some smart reply from the gentlemen, when Mr. Tennent, with solemnity added, "We are ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We profess ourselves his servants; we are sent on his business, which is to persuade mankind to repent of their sins, and turn from them, and to accept of that happiness and salvation which is offered in the gospel." This very unexpected reply, delivered in a very tender though solemn manner, and with great apparent sincerity, so engaged the gentlemen's attention, that the cards were laid aside, and an opportunity was afforded, and cheerfully embraced, for explaining, in a sociable conversation, during the rest of the evening, some of the leading and most important doctrines of the gospel, to the satisfaction and apparent edification of the hearers." (92-94).

(1) Foote, Sketches, I, 144.

(2) Foote, Sketches, I, 144.

A fellow-student of William Tennent's at the Neshaminy Log College, Samuel Blair, too, had been born in Ireland (in 1712), and came early in life to Monmouth, New Jersey. Licensed by the Presbytery of Philadelphia in 1733, he moved in 1739 to Fagg's Manor (now Londonderry), Chester County, Pennsylvania, and there started his own school. In a special way Blair was connected with the early history of the Hanover revival. It was the enthusiasm of the revival in his congregation beginning in 1740 that Robinson had carried on his missionary trip to Virginia, and one of Blair's most noted students was Samuel Davies. (1)

After William Tennent and Samuel Blair returned from their trip in 1745 there is no recorded visit of a Presbyterian missionary in the various narratives until the arrival in April 1747 of Samuel Davies.

IV.

An almost totally unexplored aspect of the attempt to form the struggling and dispirited band of Dissenters into a Presbyterian congregation is the part played by the Reverend John Thomson, of Amelia County. Writers on the Hanover movement have ignored him entirely, and those who write of the Church as a whole, or the establishment of Presbyterianism in the western part of Virginia have said nothing of his connection with the Hanover congregation. (2)

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(1) There is a sketch of Samuel Blair in Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit, III, 62-66. When Davies was asked on his return from Europe about the pulpit orators there, he said: "...there was scarce one of them who exceeded, and most of them came far short of his old master, Mr. Blair, both as to the matter of their discourses, and the impression produced by their delivery." Foote, Sketches, I, 145. Blair died in 1751 at the age of thirtynine from an illness contracted on a trip to Princeton to attend a meeting of the Board of Trustees.

(2) For my information of facts in this section I have relied primarily on John G. Herndon's "The Reverend John Thomson," in 20 J 116-158 and 21 J 34-59. Although Herndon has drawn much material from the collections in the Library of Congress used for this study, he seems to have overlooked the letter from Patrick Henry to Dawson [Appendix III]. Although his facts are well substantiated, Herndon's outspoken approval of the stand taken by the conservatives leads

Another of the many Scotsmen who so enriched the intellectual life of Virginia in this period, John Thomson entered the University of Glasgow in March 1706. He began his trials under the supervision of the Presbytery of Armagh in 1711 and was licensed in 1713. Soon after that he brought his wife and family to America, and immediately put himself under the care of the Presbytery of Philadelphia. Because of his background and his ability as a minister and leader he rose to prominence soon after his ordination in 1717. A tribute to his ability was paid by the new Synod in electing him twice moderator of that body, an honor not held by any other minister in that period.

The two great interests of Thomson's ministry were both to play important parts in his relation to our subject: he was vitally concerned with the education and standards of the ministers of the Church, and he early gained his lifelong interest in the religious life of Virginia.

The unfortunate split in the Synod in 1741 found John Thomson in the forefront of the conservative element, attacked by and attacking Gilbert Tennent and his band of New Light fellow-presbyters. From the very first he led the fight to hold the Synod to the Westminster Confession and keep out Enthusiastic candidates by requiring their examination by the Synod rather than by the presbyteries. His Adopting Act of 1729 was an entering

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him to such an unsympathetic attitude toward the leaders of the Awakening that he is in danger of underestimating their evangelistic zeal and the sobriety and piety of some of them. The bitterness and lack of charity in Thomson's writing is not surpassed by the clergymen of the Establishment in Virginia, and if he was as balanced and godly as portrayed by Herndon his printed works must be read with more charity than is shown by Herndon toward the New Lights. The total impression of the article is that the Synod of New York (the outgrowth of the New Light presbytery) was a small handful of fanatic and intolerant men who would corrupt the Church, and who after a few years of bickering and weakening the Church came back into the fold:—an interpretation hardly borne out by figures or contemporary accounts. A much more balanced and understanding article is "The Conservative Attitude Toward the Great Awakening," by Leonard W. Labaree, of Yale, in 1 W(3) 331-352.

wedge in the split to come, and the wording of the intention of the act clearly shows the attitude which was to characterise his writing during the years of internecine strife: "An overture humbly offered to the consideration of the reverend Synod; wherein is proposed an expedient for preventing the ingress and spreading of dangerous errors, either among ourselves or the flocks committed to our care." (1)

His leadership was even more pronounced in 1741 when he carried to Synod his overture to Donegal Presbytery:

> ...to prevent disorderly persons from intruding into our congregations and [to prevent our people] from going to hear them.
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> . . . . . .
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> The divisive, uncharitable, rash judging [and] disorderly practice of some members of our Synod who take upon them, in a very daring and presumptuous manner, to pass sentence upon their brethren, as it were by wholesale without distinction, as carnal, graceless, unconverted ministers, whose ministry can do no good to precious souls. [Such members] have been going about preaching to the flocks...of other ministers, sowing the seeds of divisions and possessing the people who are exceedingly amused and captivated with the show of extraordinary zeal and piety which these brethren bear before them.
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> . . . . . .
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> [As a result] most congregations in the country are reduced to such disorder and confusion that the preaching of the Word is despised and forsaken, the ministers of the Gospel are contemned and evil spoken of, their public administrations and private conduct misrepresented and traduced. (2)

This same year he published his Doctrine of Conviction Set in a Clear Light, Or an Examination and Confutation of Several Errors Relating to Conversion (Philadelphia, 1741). As his overture in 1729 had called for the mild Jonathan Dickinson's Remarks Upon A Discourse Intituled An

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(1) Herndon, "The Reverend John Thomson," 20 J 128.

(2) Herndon, "The Reverend John Thomson," 20 J 143-4.

Overture Presented to the Synod of Dissenting Ministers in Philadelphia, in September, 1728 [by J. Thomson] (New York, 1729), so this book called forth Gilbert Tennent's The Examiner, Examined, or Gilbert Tennent, Harmonious... (Philadelphia, 1743), and Samuel Finley's Clear Light put out in Obscure Darkness. Being an Examination and Refutation of Mr. Thomson's Sermon, Entituled, The Doctrine of Convictions set in a Clear Light (Philadelphia, 1743). (1)

Perhaps the words written on either side contained more forensic fire than true sentiment, for both Thomson and Tennent were to appeal from the actions and words of the troubled days that split the Church. As early as 1741 Thomson was to write: "This matter belongeth unto us in a special manner, firstly by virtue of our office and station, and again, because we have had a guilty hand in bringing in the evil, we should, therefore, strive and endeavor to have a prime and leading hand in healing and removing it." (2)

In his effort to heal the breach he had been so instrumental in causing, Tennent spoke in his Irenicum, in 1749, of Thomson as breathing "the candid and humble spirit of true Christianity," and of Thomson and his adherents "as far from opposing the late revival of religion, that on the contrary they expresaly acknowledged it, rejoiced in it, and prayed for its increase."(3) The action of both of the principals at a later date than either conciliatory

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(1) I have followed Sabin's titles rather than the somewhat different wording given in Herndon's article.

(2)Quoted in Herndon's "The Reverend John Thomson," 20 J 146 from Thomson's The Government of the Church of Christ and the Authority of Church Judicatories Established on a Scriptural Foundation (Philadelphia, 1741).

(3) Gilbert Tennent, Irenicum Ecclesiasticum, or A Humble Impartial Essay upon the Peace of Jerusalem... (Philadelphia, 1749) as quoted in Herndon's "The Reverend John Thomson," 20 J 149.

statement quoted above leads the enquirer to suspect that they regretted more the damage they had done than the opinion they had held of each other.

A much more pleasant and rewarding study is the tale of Thomson's second great interest,—the spread of the Gospel in Virginia. His interest in Virginia was aroused years before he was placed on a committee by Synod in 1737 "to visit Virginia and arrange for supplies there." (1) In 1735 he had proposed that Donegal Presbytery employ an itinerant missionary in the backwoods of Virginia. John Caldwell was a member of Thomson's congregation in Pennsylvania, and when he proposed coming to Virginia in 1738 John Thomson was on the committee who prepared for the Synod the letter to the Governor of Virginia. (2) Caldwell and his friends at Buffalo (Amelia, now Prince Edward,County) were loyal friends, and late in 1744 they called their former pastor in Pennsylvania to minister in a field in which he had long wanted to work.

There is no record of the visits paid by Thomson to Virginia as a missionary in the decade preceding his move from Pennsylvania, but a few visits found their way into the records of the church courts. In 1739 he made a trip very similar to that made by William Robinson in 1743, which meant so much to the Hanover movement. Down the Valley, in the path taken by the Scotch-Irish immigrants, he visited Opeckon, Rockfish Gap, Cub Creek, Buffalo, Hat Creek and Concord. (3) Although he had already determined to

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(1) Quoted in Herndon, "The Reverend John Thomson," 20 J 138.

(2) This letter, dated 3 May 1738, is found on page 54.

(3) Herndon, "The Reverend John Thomson," 21 J 34.

move to Virginia by 1743, he was kept in his northern pastorate until the following year, but instructed to supply the back parts of Virginia until November 1743.

Soon after his removal to Amelia, Thomson made a trip to Hanover, hoping to preach to the Dissenters there. In the light of his own declarations against ministers who attempted to preach within the congregations of others he apparently invaded the New Light area with anticipation of success. Unfortunately the record of his attitude toward the ministers of the Synod of New York had run before him, and the rector of St. Paul's Parish could report to the Commissary with sympathy:

> Mr. John Thomson came to a certain gentleman's house in our parish on Thursday the first of this month, intending to preach the following Sunday in the meeting-house lately erected here; but when he, with a few that accompany'd him, came to the house on Sunday morning, the followers of Robinson, Blair and Roan (whom I mentioned to you when at Hanburg) shut the doors against him, alledging he was an opposer of those three, the last of whom had wrote to some of them, requesting them in the name of the Lord, and for the sake of Christ Jesus, not to allow Mr. Thomson to preach in their house because he is an enemy to Christ and true religion. On hearing of this difference among them, I sent and invited Thomson to my house; he entertained me with a distinct account of these new light men, their peculiar tenets, and practices with their rise and progress to this time. (1)

Undoubtedly the memory of this meeting was still in Thomson's mind when, at Synod's request, he wrote the letter to Governor Gooch in which he said the ministers of the Synod of New York "...perhaps assume the name of Presbyterians...[but] it gives us the greatest pleasure that we can assure your Honour these persons never belonged to our body." (2)

It is unfortunate that we have no more accounts of the activities of John Thomson during these years of strife between the New Lights and

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(1) Patrick Henry to Commissary Dawson, 13 February 1744/5, Dawson MSS, our Appendix III.

(2) This letter and Governor Gooch's reply are printed in Foote's Sketches, I, 138-140. Herndon glibly reports the event: "That day Thomson prepared at the request of Synod a letter to the Governor of Virginia who had been

their opponents in both the Establishment and the Synod of Philadelphia. Were those who accompanied Thomson to Hanover friends of the Morrises, Rices, Holts and others --the same, perhaps, whom young people from Hanover were visiting when they first heard Robinson preach two years before? Did Thomson know other ministers of the Established Church beside Henry, and was he well received by them? Without knowing more of Thomson's activity it is difficult to understand the full significance of the situation Davies was to enter two years later.

When Donegal Presbytery met in the fall of 1745 they appointed John Thomson, Samuel Black (of Albemarle County) and John Craig (of Augusta) a committee with the authority to act with full power in ecclesiastical matters in Virginia. (1) For all practical purposes their influence was restricted to the Old Light churches of the Valley and Amelia and Albemarle Counties, but it may have been the intention of Presbytery to include all Virginia.

John Thomson apparently enjoyed a successful ministry in Amelia County. In 1749 he published in Williamsburg his An Explication of the Shorter Catechism..., which was printed by William Parks. In the appendix of this work he included the Thirty-nine Articles and attempted to show the unity of faith between the Presbyterians and the Church of England. Thomson wrote:

> And here I do acquaint the reader, who perhaps might not know so much before, that in all the British Dominions where the Church of England is established by law, the Presbyterian ministers in general do freely and without scruple, in pursuance of the Act of Toleration, made in

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in correspondence with the Moderator over certain religious distrubances that had been taking place between the New Lights and the legally recognized Presbyterians. No further difficulty on that score was ever again noted by the Synod." (21 J 37)

(1) Herndon, "The Reverend John Thomson," 21 J 37.

> King William's reign, in favor of Protestant Dissenters, I say, they in general subscribe all these 39 articles, except [those]...which do only relate to the Authority, ceremonies, Homilies, and Consecration of Archbishops, and Bishops and Ordination of Priests and Deacons; and not at all to any main point of Christian Faith. (1)

Among those who "might not know so much before" may have been the five rectors who, under Patrick Henry's leadership, drew up the petition presented to the House of Burgesses in 1751,—which petition included many of the arguments Thomson had given Henry against the New Lights. (2)

As Davies was rising to prominence in Virginia, the ageing minister looked about for even more challenging fields, and in 1751 he made a missionary trip to North Carolina, and died there in 1752 or 1753. (3)

The records are too brief and scattered to form a clear picture of Thomson's work in Virginia. On the basis of the few letters and minutes surviving Thomson can not be very highly regarded for the part he played in the Hanover revival. On the other hand, he probably was loved by his own congregation. He ministered faithfully to them according to the conceptions of the conservative element of the Church, and in his writings left an unusual contribution to Virginia's literary heritage of the Colonial period.

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(1) John Thomson, An Explication of the Shorter Catechism... (Williamsburg, 1749), Appendix "To the Reader," iii.

(2) Appendix IV.

(3) Herndon states he did not return from this trip. On his way to North Carolina he met Henry Patillo and persuaded him to enter the Presbyterian ministry, and had he been able to follow up this meeting Thomson would have sent him north to study at the Alison or McDowell school under the care of Donegal Presbytery. Instead Patillo came under Davies' ministry and studied theology in his home. Patillo's ministry is further noted in Foote's Sketches of North Carolina.

XII.

SAMUEL DAVIES.

* * *

It would hardly be expected, that one so rigid with respect to his own faith and practice, could be so generous and catholic in his sentiments of those who differed from him in both, as he was. He was strict, not bigoted; conscientious, not squeamishly scrupulous. His clear and extensive knowledge of religion enabled him to discern where the main stress should be laid, and to proportion his zeal to the importance of things, too generous to be confined to the interests of a party as such. He considered the visible kingdom of Christ as extended beyond the boundaries of this or that particular denomination, and never supposed that his declarative glory was wholly dependant on the religious community which he most approved. Hence he gloried more in being a Christian, than in being a Presbyterian, though he was the latter from principle. His truly catholic address to the established Clergy of Virginia is a demonstration of the sincere pleasure it would have given him, to have heard that "Christ was preached," and substantial religion, common Christianity, promoted by those who "walked not with him," and whom he judged in other points to be mistaken. His benevolent heart could not be so soured, nor his enlarged soul so contracted, as to value men from circumstantial distinctions, but according to their personal worth.

——Samuel Finley, "The disinterested and devoted Christian: A sermon preached at Nassau-Hall, Princeton, May 28, 1761. Occasioned by the death of the Rev. Samuel Davies, A. M. Late President of the College of New-Jersey."

The turning point in the history of the revival of religion in Hanover County which led to the establishment of the Presbyterian congregation there may justifiably be placed as the fourteenth of April 1747. On that day the twenty-three year old Samuel Davies was licensed by the Governor and Council to preach in Virginia. (1)

The wisdom of the course pursued by the young evangelist from the very first cannot be minimized if the impact of his ministry upon the religious life of the Colony is to be properly evaluated. Whether one agrees with the value of his aims is immaterial; the tact and ability with which he accomplished the establishment of Presbyterianism in eastern Virginia must command admiration.

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(1) Samuel Davies was born of Welsh parents, David and Martha Thomas Davies [or David], in New Castle County, Delaware. His grandfather, Morgan David, had come to Pennsylvania from Lantwidroyrde, Wales, in about 1684. A yeoman, his sons David and John (great-grandfather of Jefferson Davis) were farmers who moved to Pencader Hundred, Delaware. Martha Thomas joined the Welsh Tract Baptist Church in 1711, but after an altercation with the leaders of the congregation she was expelled 4 March 1732 and apparently joined St. George's Presbyterian Church. Their son Samuel was born 3 November 1723 near Summit Ridge, and was placed for his early schooling under Rev. Abel Morgan, pastor of the Welsh Baptist Church. Soon after Samuel Finley opened his school at Fagg's Manor, Chester County, Pennsylvania, in 1743, Davies entered it. Some accounts say, but without quoting any source, that Davies studied under William Robinson there for a period. Davies was licensed 30 July 1746, and was ordained by Newcastle Presbytery 19 February 1747. It seems that Davies' parents moved to Virginia with him, and his father died there. After her son's death, Martha Davies was taken into the home of John Rodgers, of New York, and lived with him until her death.

There is a bibliographical note to a memoir of Davies in the American Quarterly Register, Vol. 9, No. 4 (May, 1837) which is standard for the older accounts of Davies: "Brief biographical notices of President Davies may be found in prefaces to the editions of his sermons; in the funeral sermons of Drs. Gibbons and Finley, generally prefixed to the sermons of Davies; in the second volume of the Panoplist; Middleton's Evangelical biograph; Assembly's Missionary Magazine; State of Religion in Virginia; Rev. David Bostwick's account prefixed to Davies sermon on the death of George II; appendix to Rev. Dr. Ashbel Green's Baccalaurate Addresses; and in President Allen's American Biographical Dictionary; the most copious and interesting biography is found in the second volume 1819 of the Evangelical and Literary Magazine, edited by Dr. John H. Rice." [1W (2) 270.]

There is no record of a breach at any time between the young Welshman and the two Scottish Governors of Virginia in the years of Davies ministry in the Colony, although it is certain that at times Gooch must have been severely tried by the problems Davies' early ministry forced on him in the form of complaints from the clergy of the Established Church and their friends in Williamsburg. From the day Davies arrived in Virginia until Governor Gooch died, the minister had nothing but praise for him, and felt absolutely sure of the Governor's friendship and aid. Perhaps the Governor's Presbyterian background inclined him to receive Davies with an open mind, and the intelligence and tact of the minister insured his never overstepping the bounds of his position. In everything Davies attempted to maintain a strictly legal attitude, whether he succeeded or not, and this probably aided in maintaining the favorable impression he made on his first visit to the capital.

In view of the charges made against the Hanover congregation, it is rather remarkable that Davies' license was granted at that time. We have no record of the date of Davies' arrival in Williamsburg or how long it took him to secure his license. In his letter to Dr. Bellamy he said: "Upon my arrival I petitioned the general court to grant me a license to officiate in and around Hanover, at four meeting-houses, which, after some delay, was granted, upon my qualifying according to the act of toleration." (1)

Unless the Act of Toleration was considered as non-operative in the Colony, there seems to be little reason for refusing to grant the license asked for by a man against whom nothing had been charged. The Council

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(1) Quoted in Appendix I.

was divided on each petition of Davies' of which we have record, from the from the first day until his position was considered established. On 14 April 1747 the record states:

> On the petition of Samuel Davies, a Dissenting Minister, who, this day in Court, took the usual oaths to his Majesty's person and government, and subscribed the Test, and likewise publicly declared his assent thereunto, he is allowed to assemble and meet any congregations of Dissenters, at the several meeting-houses, on the lands of Samuel Morris, David Rice, and Stephen Leacy, in Hanover county, and on the lands of Thomas Watkins in Henrico county, without molestation, they behaving in a peaceable manner, and conforming themselves according to the directions of the acts of parliament in that behalf made. (1)

It is possible that Davies met the leading members of his future pastorate in Williamsburg, as many of them were due there soon for the trials instituted against them. Neither Davies nor Morris recorded the date of his arrival in Hanover, but it was soon after obtaining his license. The situation in Hanover was tense and events seemed to be moving rapidly to a crisis. The nagging discouragements with which the congregation had been faced for two years and longer were replaced by more serious ones. With the trial of so many of their leaders pending on the seventeenth of the month, the question of the possibility, to say nothing of the desirability, of continuing their readings confronted the congregation. To add to the excitement, their great spiritual leader, Mr. Whitefield, passed through Hanover on one of his journeys. (2) The urgency of action was impressed on those who opposed the Dissenters, and an order was put up on the door of the Reading-house warning the people of the enforcement of the law against gathering to hear itinerants. (3)

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(1) Quoted in Foote, Sketches, I, 160.

(2) Patrick Henry to William Dawson, 29 April 1747, Dawson MSS.

(3) Foote, Sketches, I, 162.

The arrival of Davies would have been greeted with joy by the members of the struggling congregation under any circumstances, but it was the license from the Governor and Council which lifted the clouds. On the twenty-ninth of April the distressed rector of St. Paul's reported to the Commissary that Davies had preached nearly every day since his arrival, "greatly applauded by his followers, and by none more than a certain great man of your acquaintance." (1)

On the twenty-first of April the new minister wrote a full explanation of his stand on the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Anglican Church. He presented this to Henry with the explanation: "...as a few clauses in some of the Articles of the Church of England, from subscribing to which dissenting ministers are not expressly exempted by the Act of Toleration, may bear an explication which I cannot adopt, nor assent to: I think it my duty, for the satisfaction of my conscience, and that I may act with gospel simplicity, to present to you...declaring in what sense I take them." (2) A few days later Davies took back his copy, stating that he intended to present it to the Governor. (3) Henry had made a copy of the paper which he sent to the Commissary.

In most respects Davies' visit to Hanover was much like that of the other missionaries, except for his license to preach, and was so regarded by many people, including Patrick Henry. The young minister preached in the various meeting-houses, strengthened the congregation, and on the last Sunday in May he administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to "a

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(1) Patrick Henry to William Dawson, 29 April 1747, Dawson MSS. Who the "great man" was I have no idea unless it was John Syme, Jr., or John Chiswell.

(2) Samuel Davies to Patrick Henry, 21 April 1747, Dawson MSS.

(3) Patrick Henry to William Dawson, 29 April 1747, Dawson MSS. The copy the rector made of Davies' statement is in this same collection.

great many communicants." (1) To the rector and the Anglican churchmen in Hanover Davies' visit bore out their convictions concerning the Presbyterians. On the eighth of June, Patrick Henry again reported to the Commissary:

> Mr. Davies, whom the Governor was pleased to indulge in preaching about six weeks in Hanover, is to leave it today or tomorrow: and as I still suspected that all of his fraternity were disturbers of the societies of Christians of all denominations, by declining to settle in any place, so I am now confirmed in that opinion of them, by Mr. Davies conduct.
>
> This man (who was with me last Friday and Saturday) told us that he did not intend to return hither till next spring and perhaps not then; and after he took his leave of me, I was informed by a gentleman in Amelia that Mr. Davies is to preach at Goochland Court House next Thursday, from whence he is to travel as far as Roanoke, preaching at certain appointed places in his way, and that circular letters and advertisements are dispersed all over the upper parts of the Colony; that the people may have notice of the time and places of meeting. My informer saw one of the circular letters, and the advertisement at Goochland Courthouse has, I believe, been seen by hundreds.
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> . . . . . .
>
> I need not inform you of the present distracted condition of my parish, nor of the future disturbances I justly apprehend from these itinerants, who make it their study to screw up the people to the greatest heights of religious frenzy, and then leave them in that wild state, for perhaps ten or twelve months, till another Enthusiast comes among them, to repeat the same thing over again, and this hath been the case here for these two years past. (2)

Henry's appraisal of Davies' tenure in Virginia was mistaken, to his later discomfort. At the time the letter was written the return of the young minister seemed unlikely, and Davies himself may have confided in the rector his lack of enthusiasm for Virginia (which he later admitted). But the expectations of both were upset by the events of the summer and fall of 1747 in the life of the evangelist. On the twenty-third of October of the preceding year, less than three months after he was licensed

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(1) Patrick Henry to William Dawson, 8 June 1747, Dawson MSS.

(2) Patrick Henry to William Dawson, 8 June 1747, Dawson MSS.

to preach, Samuel Davies had been married to Sarah Kirkpatrick. In September 1747 the young husband buried his wife and anticipated son. (1) Bereaved, and inclined to ill-health naturally, Davies fell very ill, not expecting to live until spring.

In the spring the congregation in Hanover, fearing that Davies might not return, sent a letter, or pastoral call, signed by the heads of one hundred fifty families. Had this letter been preserved many of the difficulties in determining the members and condition of Dissenters in Hanover would be solved. The appeal from the Virginians, and Davies' certainty of his approaching death prompted him to return to Hanover, to spend his few remaining days ministering as "a dying man to dying men." (2)

Davies did not return to Virginia alone, however. He returned only on the condition that his close friend John Rodgers accompany him. (3) This time the couple came to Hanover before coming to Williamsburg. As the account of the opposition encountered by the young ministers before the General Court is so vividly told in Rodger's biography, and presents so many interesting hints on the legal prospect of the Dissenters in 1748, and extended quotation appears justified:

> Mr. Rodgers produced his testimonials from the Presbytery, etc. and requested that they might be read; but this was opposed. Sir William Cooch repeatedly ordered the clerk of the court to take them from Mr. Rodgers, who stood holding them in his hand, and to read them; but more than one of the members of the court pointedly objected to his proceeding; alleging that it was their right to sit in council on the subject, before any further step was taken; and that they demanded the exercise of the privilege

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(1) Nothing more is known of Sarah Kirkpatrick than the bare entry by Davies in a family Bible. Joseph Brown Turner in "Records of Old Londonderry Congregation, Now Faggs Manor, Chester Co., Pa.," 8 J 345, tells of a Hanse Kirkpatrick who was an elder in that church, in which Davies worshipped while studying for the ministry, who also died in 1746. That Sarah should have been his daughter seems not unlikely.

(2) This expression of Richard Baxter's was not used by Davies by accident. Not only the theology, but the expressions of Baxter were widely used by ministers of the Awakening. Davies and other Virginians were familiar
[notes continued on next page]

> on the present occasion. Sir William then bowing to Mr. Davies and Mr. Rodgers, said, "Gentlemen, you shall hear from us in a day or two."
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> In the afternoon of the next day, Sir William Gooch sent for them, requesting to see them at his house, to which they immediately repaired. There they found Sir William, together with three other members of the court, who were friendly to their views. On being seated, Sir William addressed himself to Mr. Davies in the following terms: "Sir, it has been with the greatest difficulty that we have been able to prevent the court from revoking your license, and sending you out of the colony. This, however, we have been happy enough to prevent."--Then turning to Mr. Rodgers, he said, "I am extremely sorry to inform you, Sir, that the gentlemen of the court will by no means consent to your qualifying, as the law directs, for preaching in the colony." Mr. Rodgers thanked Sir William for his friendship; but added, that he was not asking a favour, but pleading a right; and therefore could not help considering himself as injured by its refusal. Sir William acknowledged the justice of this remark, and again expressed his regret at the course things had taken. (1)

Gooch then advised them to present a memorial to the court, and he absented himself from the court the next day when they presented it. "When it was read, the oldest member of the court, who filled the chair in the absence of the lieutenant governor, put an end to further discussion, by declaring publicly and with warmth, 'We have Mr. Rodgers out, and we are determined to keep him out.'" (2)

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with his writings, and at least one description of the revival in Philadelphia coincides almost word for word with Baxter's description of the increase of religion in Kidderminster.

(3) John Rodgers was born in 1727 in Boston, but his parents moved to Philadelphia the next year. He was converted at the age of twelve by the ministry of Whitefield (on the same trip in which he first preached in Williamsburg). In 1741-43 he studied under Roan at Neshaminy, then went to Gagg's Manor where he was a classmate of Davies'. Davies' third son was named John Rodgers after the friend who later cared for his mother after the president's death. Rodgers had a very successful ministry in New York City, serving in the Revolution as a chaplain to Washington's forces in New York, and as chaplain of the legislature.

(1) Samuel Miller, Life of the Reverend John Rodgers (New York, 1813), 49-51.

(2) Miller, Life of...John Rodgers, 51. Samuel Miller was Rodgers' assistant pastor in his old age, and followed him in his New York pulpit. The story must have been written verbatim as told by Rodgers, but it has an air of romance about it that suggests conversations remembered over a period of

John Rodgers returned to the North, and Samuel Davies took up his residence in Hanover. Contrary to his plans of the preceding year, he was to remain for ten years, and to see Presbyterianism firmly established throughout the Colony. (1)

The original congregation in Hanover, with its three licensed meeting-houses was expanded in the fall to include almost the entire area of the original dissenting movement. The petition before the General Court is recorded;

> November 1st, 1748. Present--of the council,--Robinson, Burwell, Fairfax, Blair, Nelson, and Lewis. On petition of divers of the inhabitants of the counties of Louisa, Goochland, and Carolina [sic], Samuel Davies, a dissenting minister, who hath qualified himself according to the Act of Toleration, is allowed to assemble and meet any congregation of Protestant Dissenters, at the several meeting-houses to be erected on the land of Joseph Shelton, near Owen's Creek, in the county of Louisa,--on the land of Tucker Woodson, in the county of Goochland,--and on the land of John Sutton, at Needwood, in the county of Caroline, without molestation, they behaving in a peaceable manner. [sic] and conforming themselves according to the directions of the said Act of Parliament in that behalf made.(2)

With the establishment of this congregation, in its seven meeting-houses, the story of the Dissenting movement in Hanover County should end. From 1748 the direction of the congregation was in the hands of a competent minister, and was a definite part of the Presbyterian Church, of the Synod of New York, of the Presbytery of Newcastle, and later to become the center of the Presbytery of Hanover.

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half a century. Miller identifies two of the sympathetic councillors as John Blair (whom he mistakenly calls the Commissary's son, an error which Rice's Evangelical and Literary Magazine, III, 112, follows but later corrected), and Mr. Dick. As there was neither a Dick or Digges on the council at that time I do not know who was intended. Foote, Sketches, I, 166, identifies one as William Dawson. Miller gives Rodger's reaction to his treatment in Virginia: "He lamented, however, afterwards, that he had not appealed to the King in council; as such a measure would not only, in all probability, have secured redress in his own case; but also have done good, in subsequent cases of a similar kind. The celebrated Dr. Doddridge, of Great-Britain, also expressed his regret that such a step had not been taken." (55)

(1) Thomas Dawson wrote the Bishop of London 13 August 1755: "The New-Lights [illegible] two names for [illegible]

In the decade preceding 1748 in and around Hanover County an original social movement had taken place. A group of men independently decided that one of the patters in which their lives were normally set was inadequate to satisfy the assumed purpose of that communal function. Finding themselves in accord, they essayed to set aside that accepted mode of accomplishing the desired purpose—at the risk of assaulting the mores of the community, of incurring the liabilities of disobedience of legal statutes and civil authority, and of striving for an unidentified goal by undefined methods. That, under these circumstances, they should have achieved a satisfactory solution is remarkable; that their success altered the social, ethical, legal and religious structure not only of their community, but of the section and eventually of the Colony, secures the approval of historical experience for both their motive and their method.

This could have happened in another place and time, and has happened with variations in innumerable places throughout history. Its successful completion at a period when a large number of independent similar incidents occured argues for an even wider law, and more powerful motivation, than has been illustrated in this study. Perhaps it is not historical

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seem to be in a declining condition during the absence of Mr. Davies, but upon his return they revived, at least they make much noise. Mr. Davies delivered to the Governor a scheme for the settlement of a new colony, etc.,—a copy of which I thought proper to send Your Lordship." (Dawson MSS). Although this was written by the Commissary after Davies' trip to England, it might well have been written by his brother William in 1748, for certainly on Davies' return from the North the Hanover Dissenters "revived [and made] much noise."

(2) Foote, Sketches, I, 168. Davies had the following added: "On motion of Samuel Davies, a dissenting minister—it is ordered that the certificate of his reading, assenting to, and subscribing the articles of Religion according to the Act of Toleration be recorded." (169)

method which derives the writer's conclusion, but, if his thesis is valid, evidence does not preclude the identity of that basic law as "the long-gathering storm [which breaks forth as] we gaze on the dividing of the flames of fire, the shaking of the wilderness and the terrific land-flood," that which Samuel Morris and Samuel Davies surely conceived it to be — the

Irresistible Grace of God.

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A CRITICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY.

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There is a story in the writing of the history of the Great Awakening as interesting as the history it records. Few groups more ready and able to expound their own particular views can be found in any movement of comparable size and importance than can be found in the leaders of the Awakening in the American Colonies. They were outspoken in their pulpits, and their style of writing follows closely their exhortations. Most of them wrote copiously, and much of what was written was printed immediately, and much in the later periods of interest in revivals of religion.

Illustrative of these waves of interest in religion in America is the tale of the six letters written by Davies to President Stith of William and Mary, and their vicissitudes between his pen and their publication almost two hundred years later. After the manner of eighteenth century pamphlet wars, Davies engaged throughout his ministry in Virginia in a running battle with ministers of the Established Church. At one stage of the controversy President Stith preached in Williamsburg, and had published, a sermon entitled The Nature and Extent of Christ's Redemption. A Sermon Preached Before the General Assembly [sic] of Virginia at Williamsburg, November 11th, 1753, (Williamsburg, 1753). As this sermon both mentioned a previous work of Davies' and attacked his position, Davies was moved to answer Stith. He had preached a sermon in Caroline County 5 August 1753, "to a congregation supposed to consist of a thousand people at least," (1) which he expanded two years later into a

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(1) This quotation in Richard Webster's introduction to these letters, called "A Visit from Samuel Davies to Virginia in 1856," in the work we are discussing. Webster does not identify his source.

series of six letters to William Stith, completing the manuscript on 4 July 1755. While the manuscript was still being examined by his friends Braddock was defeated and the Colony thrown into turmoil. Davies postponed publication until peace should be restored, and in that interim President Stith died (19 September 1755). Davies now thought "the publication entirely improper, lest he should seem to insult the memory of the dead, for which he had a sincere regard, or to triumph without an antagonist." (1)

The manuscript was sent by Davies to Great Britain, and was there forgotten. A century later the manuscript was secured by the Presbyterian Historical Society from Dr. Robert Burns of Toronto, and Richard Webster, secretary of the society , was transcribing this manuscript at the time of his death in 1856. For almost another century following Webster's death the sermons were neglected, and the work was edited, finally, by Thomas C. Pears, Jr., and was published by the Presbyterian Historical Society as numbers five to seven of the nineteenth volume of the Journal of the Department of History of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. The volume now carries the title given it by Samuel Davies, Charity and Truth United Or The Way of the Multitude Exposed... (Philadelphia, 1941).

This extended reference to one book is typical in many ways of the publication of the materials from this period. The majority of the accounts of the Hanover revival are based upon a few basic narratives elaborated upon in one of the several waves of interest in such movements since they were written. The first of these is the letter of Samuel

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(1) A note in Davies' handwriting on the reverse of the title page of this manuscript.

Davies to Reverend Joseph Bellamy of Bethlehem, Connecticut, dated 27 June 1751, which is Appendix One of this study. A second letter of Davies', this to the Bishop of London dated 10 January 1752 (and a six page postscript dated 21 May) is printed in Foote's Sketches of Virginia, I, 180-211. These two letters contain the narrative of the Hanover movement as they record the recollection and impression it made on Samuel Morris and Samuel Davies.

Two other men preserved for us first hand narratives of the movement, but they were written at a much later date. Davies' schoolmate and friend John Rodgers told his version of the story to his successor and biographer Samuel Miller, who printed the account in The Life of the Reverend John Rodgers (New York, 1813). John Holt Rice gathered much of the material of the remaining well-known original accounts for his Virginia Evangelical and Literary Magazine, published in Richmond from 1818 to 1828. Rice, in addition to his close connection with the Church in Virginia as a minister and president of Union [Presbyterian] Theological Seminary in Virginia (then in Prince Edward County), was but one generation removed from the men who had participated in the awakening in Hanover. Davies' wife was his great-aunt; Davies' successor, David Rice, his uncle; and Governor Patrick Henry's sister-in-law was his step-mother. He knew many of the people who had participated in the revival, and had gathered testimony and documents from others. In the Evangelical and Literary Magazine Rice printed memoirs of Davies and others, many of Davies' letters, and the account of the early years of the Hanover movement as given by the father of Rev. James Hunt, who was one of the "four Gentlemen" first absenting themselves from church. This account differs from Morris' and the picture

would be very different without it, as is seen in the later accounts based solely on Davies' letters or Gillies' Historical Collections.

These are the primary sources from which the majority of the accounts have been drawn until recent years. They are not, however, the only important contemporary sources. The most important single location of manuscript material, for the topic examined, is the Library of Congress. Here are not only the Dawson papers,—letters and documents to and from the brothers Thomas and William Dawson, the Bishop of London's Commissaries in Virginia,—but also the transcripts relating to the Church of England in Virginia taken from the papers of the Fulham and Lambeth palaces in England. These latter collections are the heritage of the work of the Reverend Francis L. Hawks, who first used them in his Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of the United States (New York, 1836) [Vol. I on Virginia], and his successor who published many of them, William Stevens Perry, author of Historical Collections Relating to the American Colonial Church (Hartford, 1870-78)[Vol. 1 of the five volumes being those relating to Virginia], and a History of the American Episcopal Church (Boston, 1885) in two volumes. These papers have been used by most of the recent writers on the subject, particularly those writing of the Established Church. They are augmented by even more recent material in Elizabeth H. Davidson's "The Establishment of the English Church in Continental American Colonies," Historical Papers of the Trinity College Historical Society, Series XX (Durham, N. C., 1936), E. L. Goodwin's The Colonial Church in Virginia (Milwaukee, c1927), and the first of the three-volume Virginia's Mother Church... (Richmond, 1947), by George Maclaren Brydon.

The Library of Congress also has a miscellaneous collection of manuscripts called the Virginia Religious Papers. Two books of letters to George Whitefield,

with letters from American correspondents, completes the collections in the Library of Congress which I consulted.

While there are manuscripts relating to the subject in the libraries of Princeton University, Union Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Virginia, the Library Company of Philadelphia, the Virginia State Library, the College of William and Mary, and other places, no single group equals the importance of that in Washington. Perhaps the most exhaustive search for material on this specific phase of the Awakening was made by George H. Bost, a student of Dr. William W. Sweet at the University of Chicago, while writing his thesis "Samuel Davies, Colonial Revivalist and Champion of Religious Toleration" (Typed thesis, University of Chicago, 1942), which was his doctoral dissertation. Bost spent a year of his work under the auspices of Colonial Williamsburg, Incorporated. His unpublished thesis is the only complete book which has been written on the life of Davies. His bibliography, supplemented by that in The Great Awakening in Virginia, 1740-1790 (Durham, N. C., 1930), by Wesley M. Gewehr, comprise the most complete bibliography on this movement in Virginia.

Three other classifications of material rival those already mentioned in their original information. The first of these is the Virginia Gazette, published in Williamsburg during these years by William Parks and William Hunter. The second is the group of journals and diaries kept by the participants and printed at various times. Davies' diary of his trip to England was published by William Foote in Sketches of Virginia, I, 228-281. The diary of Colonel James Gordon, of Lancaster County, was published in the William and Mary College Quarterly Historical Magazine, First Series, Volume Eleven, beginning on page 98 and continuing through several issues. The journals of George Whitefield and John Wesley have gone through many editions and are easily found.

The third classification is that of the printed and manuscript letters of the participants. Many are in the collections already mentioned, particularly the eighteen letters from Davies to John Holt in the Library Company of Philadelphia. Others appeared in contemporary pamphlets and books. The most notable of these was Rev. John Gillies' Historical Collections Relating to Remarkable Periods of the Success of the Gospel, originally published in 1754, but best known now in its revised edition printed at Kelso in 1845 by Rev. Horatius Bonar. This contains letters written during the Awakening (with an eye to publication) by most of the New Light participating clergy.

There are numerous sermons printed separately or in collections which appeared in print during the Awakening. Many of them have been noted as they appeared in the narrative of this paper. Few of them, however, contain very much of historical interest, except for their doctrine or recriminations. A few letters by Davies and others appeared in The General Assembly's Missionary Magazine or Evangelical Intelligencer: For 1805...Vol. I. (Philadelphia, 1806), including some of Davies' letters to Holt which Benjamin Rush gave to the Library Company of Philadelphia, but these are not identified as such.

In the first half of the nineteenth century there appeared several general histories of Virginia which included the accounts of the Hanover revival. John D. Burk's The History of Virginia (4 vol., Petersburg, 1804-16), John W. Campbell's A History of Virginia from its discovery till the year 1781... (Philadelphia, 1813), Robert R. Howison's A History of Virginia (2 vol., Richmond, 1848), Henry Howe's Historical Collections of Virginia (Charleston, 1849), and Charles Campbell's History of Virginia (Richmond, 1847) were followed in a slightly different vein by William Henry Foote's Sketches of Virginia [First Series] (Philadelphia, 1850) and later a second series in 1855.

During these years also appeared Bishop William Meade's Old Churches, Ministers and Families of Virginia (Philadelphia, 1857, 2 vol.) The very noticeable lack of authoritative material in these volumes is the product of the age in which they were written. This is also true of the histories noted in the last chapter. Personal memoirs, legends, partially copied manuscripts, letters with names deleted, and other regrettable characteristics of these books seriously mars their use. The work of Francis Hawks and William Foote is almost free of these defects. By this time the use of secondary material was common, and we can begin to trace what is almost a family tree of the errors, prejudices and legends which appear in many works today. Yet these men did valuable work in collecting the memoirs which would have disappeared otherwise, and in giving us even mutilated sketches of documents which have been destroyed since.

Another type of writing has also recorded the Hanover revival, --the church histories, written primarily by and for clergymen. In the Presbyterian Church they include Charles Hodge's Constitutional History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States (Philadelphia, 1840), Richard Webster's A History of the Presbyterian Church in America from its Origin Until the Year 1760 (Philadelphia, 1857) [the first volume of publications by the Presbyterian Historical Society], E. H. Gillett's History of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. (Philadelphia, 1873), and many others. A similar labor of love was William B. Sprague's Annals of the American Pulpit (9 vols., New York, 1857-69), the third volume being devoted to the Presbyterian ministers, the fifth to the Episcopaleans.

In addition to the denominational histories are the local church histories. While a type of local history, they are usually biased when considering the position of Dissenters in the Colony. From such scattered books as the following

small points may be gleaned: James W. Douglas' A Manual for the Members of Briery Presbyterian Church, Virginia (Richmond, 1828), J. D. Eggleston's The Beginnings of Old Briery and Cumberland Churches (Farmville, Va., n.d.), Elizabeth Venable Gaines' Cub Creek Church and Congregation, 1738-1838 (Richmond, 1931), J. N. VanDervanter, History of the Augusta Church (1737-1900) (Staunton, 1900), A. E. Johnson's Presbyterianism in Highland County, Virginia (Monterey, Va, 1937), James R. Graham's The Planting of the Presbyterian Church In Northern Virginia (Winchester, 1904), Edward Mack's Our Presbyterian Heritage in Eastern Virginia (Richmond, 1924), James A. Waddell [and others], Contributions to the History of the Synod of Virginia (Washington, 1890), Henry A. White's Southern Presbyterian Leaders (New York, 1911), and a host of others like them. This is not meant to be a list either of sources used or of all the churches considered, it is merely a sampling through the years. In studying the history of the Presbyterian Church in Virginia, or specific congregations, some of the most detailed study is to be found in a typed thesis "Origin and Early History of Presbyterianism in Virginia" which is in the library of the Union Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Virginia in Richmond, written by D. L. Beard. Also there are session records, and presbytery records, which go back into the period of this thesis. The records of the Tinkling Springs church are in photostats in the Virginia State Library, while the original manuscript copy of the first record book of Hanover Presbytery, beginning in 1755, is in the Union Seminary Library.

The memoirs or biographies of several of the men of this movement have been printed since 1800. Dr. John E. Pomfret's sketch of Samuel Davies in the Dictionary of American Biography is essentially accurate, although it is not as full as might be desired. James Waddell Alexander wrote a Memoir of the Rev. James Waddel, D. D. for the Watchman of the South in 1844 which was

reprinted in 1880. Notes on Peyton Randolph may be found in M. D. Conway's Omitted Chapters of History...of Edmund Randolph (New York, 1888) and William C. Bruce's John Randolph of Roanoke, 1773-1833 (New York and London, 1922). John Gillies' Memoirs of Reverend George Whitefield (Middletown, 1836), and James P. Gledstone's George Whitefield, M. A., Field Preacher (New York, n.d.) leave much to be desired as biographies. For the Presbyterians, apart from the sources already discussed, Archibald Alexander's Biographical Sketches of the Founder and Alumni of the Log College (Philadelphia, 1851) is still standard. James Blair, like Davies, suffers from the want of a good biographer, or at least one who will print a book on his life. Daniel Esten Motley's "Life of Commissary James Blair...," Johns Hopkins University Studies, XIX,10 (Baltimore, 1901), is the fullest published account, but is superseded in many respects by G. MacLaren Brydon's "James Blair, Commissary," in the Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church, XIV, 86-118.

The problem of "toleration" or "religious freedom" is studied in such works as J. H. Patton's The Triumph of the Presbytery of Hanover; or Separation of Church and State in Virginia (New York, [1887?]), H. R. McIlwaine's "The Struggle of Protestant Dissenters for Religious Toleration in Virginia," Johns Hopkins University Studies, X (Baltimore, 1894), H. J. Eckenrode's The Separation of Church and State in Virginia (Richmond, 1909), and C. E. James' Documentary History of the Struggle for Religious Liberty in Virginia (n.i., 1900)--all pro-Dissenter.

Another group of books and articles in the present period comes from the renewed interest in the religious life of Colonial America. The work of Sweet, Ford, Eckenrode, Maxson and others has caused a number of men to explore the field anew, and to re-establish the meaning of the movement in

its proper place in Colonial history, and to revive the work of men forgotten in the emphasis placed in scholarship of the last century on science, political history, and social and industrial development. Both published and unpublished theses show this interest in centers of the study of American church history--Princeton, Yale, Chicago, and other universities.

Much of our information comes from small local histories. Among these are Rev. Edgar Woods' Albemarle County in Virginia (Charlottesville, 1901), Mary Rawlings' The Albemarle of Other Days (Charlottesville, 1925), J. L. Peyton's History of Augusta County, Virginia (Staunton, 1882), Malcolm Harris' History of Louisa County, Virginia (Richmond, 1936), Landon C. Bell's The Old Free State (Richmond, 1927), W. W. Scott's History of Orange County, Virginia...1734-1870 (Richmond, 1907), Susie M. Ames' Studies of the Virginia Eastern Shore in the Seventeenth Century (Richmond, 1940), Jennings C. Wise's The Early History of the Eastern Shore of Virginia (Richmond, 1911). Rosewell Page's Hanover County Its History and Legends ([n.p.], 1926) unfortunately offers very little, and none of it new. In many cases very poorly written, in a few cases well done and important books, these histories often present little facts and memories from out of the way sources missed by more able historians covering larger movements.

Some of the most valuable aid comes from books not concerned with the problems of religion at all. W. W. Hening's Statutes At Large Being A Collection Of All The Laws Of Virginia 1619-1792 (13 vols., Richmond and Philadelphia, 1809-1823), Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, 1752-1755, 1756-1758 (Richmond, 1909), edited by H. R. McIlwaine, and Morgan P. Robinson's Virginia Counties: Those Resulting From Virginia Legislation (a Bulletin of the Virginia State Library, Richmond, 1916), are but a few examples. George C. Mason's Colonial Churches of Tidewater Virginia (Richmond, 1945) actually belongs in this class, as it is architectural rather than religious.

The phenomena of the revival is itself the subject of study, and several such studies bear directly on the Hanover movement. Among Dr. William Warren Sweet's many books on religion in American history is Revivalism in America (New York, 1944) . More recent is Dr. Benjamin Lacy's Revivals in the Midst of The Years (Richmond, 1943). Older and covering a wider territory are F. M. Davenport's Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals (New York, 1905), and Frank G. Beardsley's A History of American Revivals (New York, 1904).

Most disappointing from the amount of assistance one would expect from them are the published vestry books. The Virginia State Library has published, under the editorship of C. G. Chamberlayne, the vestry books of several parishes affected by the Dissenters of Hanover in their itinerant preaching. The Vestry Book of St. Paul's Parish Hanover County, Virginia 1706-1786 (Richmond, 1940) and The Vestry Book And Register Of St. Peter's Parish New Kent and James City Counties, Virginia 1684-1786 (Richmond, 1937) yield only the most scant information, and that primarily about the rectors.

Finally, we could not close a bibliographical discussion of the Hanover movement, or any other comparable problem in Virginia history, without noting the work that makes usable the historical magazines of the state for the years before 1930,—Earl G. Swem's Virginia Historical Index (Roanoke, 1934).

APPENDIX I.

"From a Letter from Mr. Davies, Minister at Hanover, in Virginia, to Mr. Bellamy of Bethlem, in New-England, dated June 27th, 1751." John Gillies, Historical Collections Relating to Remarkable Periods of the Success of the Gospel (Kelso, 1845), pages 429-433. This was also published separately as The Substance of a Letter From Mr. Davies, Minister of the Gospel in Hanover County, Virginia, to Mr. Bellamy of Bethlem, in New England, Concerning the State of Religion in Virginia, from 1743 to June, 1751 (Printed for John Orr).

R. and D. S.—If the publication of a narrative of the rise, progress, and present situation of religion in Virginia, may not only gratify good people, but (as you give me reason to hope) animate their prayers for us, and also encourage preachers to come into these parts, I should charge myself with a criminal neglect if I refused to publish the marvellous work of the Lord among us. I hope I may observe without the umbrage of calumny what is but too evident to serious people ofall denominations among us, that religion has been, and in most parts of the colony, still is, in a very low state. A surprising negligence in attending public worship, and an equally surprising levity and unconcernedness in those that attend. Family religion a rarity, and a solemn concern about eternal things a greater. Vices of various kinds triumphant, and even a form of godliness not common. But universal fame makes it needless for me to enlarge on this disagreeable subject. Before the revival in 1743, there were a few who were awakened, as they have told me, either by their own serious reflections, suggested and enforced by Divine energy, or on reading some authors of the last century, particularly Boston, Baxter, Flavel, and Bunyan. There was one Mr. Samuel Morris, who had for some time been very anxious about his own salvation, who after obtaining blessed relief in Christ became zealous for the salvation of his neighbours, and very earnest to use means to awaken

them. This was the tendency of his conversation, and he also read to them such authors as had been most useful to himself, particularly Luther on the Galatians, and his table discourses, and several pieces of honest Bunyan's. By these means some of his neighbours were made more thoughtful about their souls, but the concern was not very extensive. I have prevailed on my good friend just now named, who was the principal private instrument of promoting the late work, and therefore well acquainted with it, to write me a narrative of its rise and progress, and this, together with what he and others have told me, I shall present to you, without any material alterations.*

"In the year 1740 Mr. Whitefield had preached at Williamsburg at the invitation of Mr. Blair, our late commissary. But we being sixty miles distant from Williamsburg, he left the colony before we had an opportunity of hearing him. But in the year 1743 a young gentleman from Scotland had got a book of his sermons, preached in Glasgow, and taken from his mouth in short hand, which, after I had read with great benefit, I invited my neighbours to come and hear them; and the plainness and fervency of these discourses being attended with the power of the Lord, many were convinced of their undone condition, and constrained to seek deliverance with the greatest solicitude. A considerable number met to hear these sermons every Sabbath, and frequently on week days. The concern of some was so passionate and violent, that they could not avoid crying out, weeping bitterly, etc. And that, when such indications of religious concern were so strange and ridiculous, that they could not be occasioned by example or sympathy,

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* I have divided this account into paragraphs, although this is not so divided in the text.

and the affectation of them would be so unprofitable an instance of hypocrisy, that none could be tempted to it.

"My dwelling-house at length was too small to contain the people, whereupon we determined to build a meeting-house, merely for reading. And having never been used to social extempore prayer, none of us durst attempt it. By this single means several were awakened, and their conduct ever since is a proof of the continuance and happy issue of their impressions. When the report was spread abroad, I was invited to several places to read these sermons, at a considerable distance, and by this means the concern was propagated. About this time, our absenting ourselves from the Established Church, contrary, as was alleged, to the laws of the land, was taken notice of, and we were called upon by the court to assign our reasons for it, and to declare what denomination we were of. As we knew but little of any denomination of dissenters, except Quakers, we were at a loss what name to assume. At length recollecting that Luther was a noted reformer, and that his books had been of special service to us, we declared ourselves Lutherans, and thus we continued till providence sent us the Rev. Mr. William Robinson.

"This Mr. Robinson was a zealous, laborious minister of Christ, who by the permission of the Presbytery took a journey through the new settlements in Pennsylvania, Virginia, and North Carolina. He founded a congregation at Lunenburgh. In Amelia also, a county somewhat nearer us than the former, his labours were extensively blest; and while he was there, some of our people sent him an invitation to come and preach at our reading-house. Being satisfied about the soundness of his principles, and being informed that the method of his preaching was awakening, we were very eager to hear him.

"On the 6th of July 1743, he preached his first sermon to us from Luke xiii. 3, and continued with us preaching four days successively. The congregation was large the first day, and vastly increased the three ensuing. It is hard for the liveliest imagination to form an image of the condition of the assembly on these glorious days of the Son of Man. Such of us as had been hungering for the Word before, were lost in an agreeable surprise and astonishment, and some could not refrain from publicly declaring their transport; we were overwhelmed with the thoughts of the unexpected goodness of God, in allowing us to hear the Gospel preached in a manner that surpassed our hopes. Many that came through curiosity were pricked to the heart, and but few in the numerous assemblies on these four days, appeared unaffected. They returned alarmed with apprehensions of their dangerous condition, convinced of their former entire ignorance of religion, and anxiously inquiring what they should do to be saved. And there is reason to believe there was as much good done by these four sermons, as by all the sermons preached in these parts before or since. Before Mr. Robinson left us, he successfully endeavoured to correct some of our mistakes, and to bring us to carry on the worship of God more regularly at our meetings.

"After this we met to read good sermons, and began and concluded with prayer and singing of psalms, which till then we had omitted. The blessing of God remarkably attended these more private means, and it was really astonishing to observe the solemn impressions begun or continued in many by hearing good discourses read. I had repeated invitations to come to many places round, some thirty or forty miles distant, to read. Considerable numbers attended with eager attention and awful solemnity, and several were in a judgement turned to God, and thereupon erected meeting-houses, and chose readers among themselves, by which the work was more extensively

carried on.

"Soon after Mr. Robinson left us, the Rev. Mr. John Blair paid us a visit; and truly he came to us in the fullness of the Gospel of Christ. Former impressions were ripened and new ones made on many hearts. One night in particular a whole houseful of people were quite overcome with the power of the Word, particularly of one pungent sentence, and they could hardly sit or stand, or keep their passions under any proper restraints. So general was the concern during his stay with us, and so ignorant were we of the danger of apostacy, that we pleased ourselves with the thoughts of more being brought to Christ at that time, than now appears to have been, though there is still the greatest reason to hope that several bound themselves to the Lord in an everlasting covenant, never to be forgotten. Some time after this, the Rev. Mr. Roan was sent us by the Presbytery of Newcastle. He continued with us longer than any of the former, and happy effects of his ministrations are still apparent. He was instrumental in beginning and promoting the religious concerns in several places where there was little appearance of it before. This, together with his speaking pretty freely about the degeneracy of the clergy in this colony, gave a general alarm, and some measures were concerted to suppress us. To incense the indignation of the government the more, a perfidious wretch deponed he heard Mr. Roan utter blasphemous expressions in his sermon. An indictment was thereupon drawn up against Mr. Roan (though by that time he had departed the colony), and some who had invited him to preach at their houses were cited to appear before the general court, and two of them were fined. While my cause was upon trial, I had reason to rejoice that the throne of grace is accessible in all places, and that helpless creatures can send up their desires unseen in the midst of a crowd. Six witness were cited to prove the indictment against Mr. Roan,

but their depositions were in his favour; and the witness who accused him of blasphemy, when he heard of the arrival of Messrs. Tennent and Finley, fled, and has not returned since; so that the indictment was dropped. But I had reason to fear being banished the colony, and all circumstances seemed to threaten the extirpation of religion among the dissenters in these parts. In these difficulties, having no person of a public character to appear in our favour, we were determined to acquaint the Synod of New York with our case. Accordingly four of us went to the Synod, May 1745, when the Lord favoured us with success. The Synod drew up an address to our governor, the honourable Sir William Gooch, and sent it with Messrs. Tennent and Finley, who were received by the governor with respect, and had liberty granted them to preach among us. By this means the dreadful cloud was scattered for a while, and our languid hopes revived. They continued with us about a week, and though the deluge of passion in which we were at first overwhelmed, was scattered for a while, and our languid hopes revived. They continued with us about a week, and much good was done by their ministry. The people of God were refreshed, and several careless sinners awakened. Some that had trusted before in their moral conduct and religious duties, were convinced of the depravity of their nature, and the necessity of regeneration, though, indeed, there were but few unregenerate persons among us at that time, that could claim so regular a character, the most part indulging themselves in criminal liberties, and being remiss in the duties of religion, which, alas! is too commonly the case still in such parts of the colony as the late revival did not extend to.

"After they left us, we continued vacant for a considerable time, and kept up our meetings for reading and prayer in several places, and

the Lord favoured us with his presence. I was again repeatedly presented and fined in court for absenting myself from church, and keeping up unlawful meetings, as they were called; 'but the bush flourished in the flames.' The next that were appointed to supply us, were the Rev. Messrs. William Tennent and Samuel Blair. They administered the Lord's supper among us, and we have reason ever to remember it as a most glorious day of the Son of Man. The assembly was large, and the novelty of the manner of the administration did peculiarly engage their attention. It appeared as one of the days of heaven to some of us; and we could hardly help wishing we could, with Joshua, have delayed the revolutions of the heavens to prolong it. After Messrs. Tennent and Blair were gone, Mr. Whitefield came and preached four or five days, which was the happy means of giving us farther encouragement, and engaging others to the Lord, especially among the church people, who received the Gospel more readily from him than from ministers of the Presbyterian denomination.

"After his departure, we were destitute of a minister, and followed our usual method of reading and prayer at our meetings, till the Rev. Mr. Davies, our present pastor, was sent us by the Presbytery to supply us a few weeks in the spring, 1747, when our discouragements from the Government were renewed and multiplied; for, upon a Lord's-day, a proclamation was set up at our meeting-house, strictly requiring all magistrates to suppress and prohibit, as far as they lawfully could, all itinerant preachers, etc., which occasioned us to forbear reading that day, till we had time to deliberate and consult what was expedient to do; but how joyfully were we surprised before the next Sabbath, when we

unexpectedly heard that Mr. Davies was come to preach so long among us, and especially that he had qualified himself according to the law, and obtained the licensing of four meeting-houses among us, which had never been done before. Thus, man's extremity is the Lord's opportunity. For this seasonable interposition of Divine providence, we desire to offer our grateful praises, and we importunate the friends of Zion to concur with us."

(Thus far Mr. Morris' narrative. Then the Rev. Mr. Davies proceeds to give account of the state of their affairs since he came among them in April, 1747).

Upon my arrival, I petitioned the General Court to grant me a license to officiate in and about Hanover, at four meeting-houses, which, after some delay, was granted, upon my qualifying according to the act of toleration. I preached frequently in Hanover, and some of the adjacent counties; and though the fervour of the late work was considerably abated, and my labours were not blessed with success equal to those of my brethren, yet I have reason to hope they were of service in several instances. The importunities they used with me to settle with them were invincible; and, upon my departure, they sent a call for me to the presbytery. —After I returned from Virginia, I spent near a year under melancholy and consumptive languishments, expecting death; in the spring, 1748, I began slowly to recover, though I then looked upon it only as an intermission of a disorder that would finally prove mortal. But, upon the arrival of a messenger from Hanover, I put my life in my hand, and determined to accept of their call, hoping I might live to prepare the way for some more useful successor, and willing to expire under the fatigues of duty, rather than in voluntary negligence.

The hon. Sir William Gooch, our late governor, always discovered a ready disposition to allow us all claimable privileges, and the greatest aversion to persecuting measures; but, considering the shocking reports spread abroad concerning us by officious malignants, it was no great wonder the council discovered a considerable reluctance to tolerate us. Had it not been for this, I persuade myself they would have shown themselves the guardians of our legal privileges, as well as generous patriots to their country, which is the character generally given them.

In October, 1748, besides the four meeting-houses already mentioned, the people petitioned for the licnesing of three more, which, with great difficulty, was obtained. Among these seven, I have hitherto divided my time. Three of them lie in Hanover county, the other four in the counties of Henrico, Carolina, Louisa, and Goochland. The nearest are twelve or fifteen miles distant from each other, and the extremes about forty. My congregation is very much dispersed, and, notwithstanding the number of the meeting-houses, some live twenty, some thirty, and some forty miles from the nearest. Were they all compactly situate in one county, they would be sufficient to form three distinct congregations. Many of the church people also attend when there is a sermon at any of these houses. This I looked upon at first as mere curiosity after novelty, but as it continues, and, in some places, seems to increase, I cannot but look upon it as a happy token of their being at length thoroughly engaged; and I have the greater reason to hope so now, as experience has confirmed my former hopes. Fifty or sixty families having thus been happily entangled in the net of the Gospel by their own curiosity, or some such motive. There are about three hundred communicants in my congregation, of whom the greatest number are, in the judgment of rational charity, real Christians. Besides some, who, through excessive scrupulousness, do

not seek admission to the Lord's table. There is also a number of negroes. Sometimes I see an hundred and more among my hearers. (Psal. lxviii. 31.) I have baptized about forty of them within these three years, upon such a profession of faith as I then judged credible. Some of them, I fear, have apostatized, but others, I trust, will perservere to the end. I have had as satisfying evidences of the sincere piety of several of them, as ever I had from any person in my life, and their artless simplicity, their passionate aspirations after Christ, their incessant endeavours to know and do the will of God, have charmed me. But, alas! while my charge is so extensive, I cannot take sufficient pains with them for their instruction, which often oppresses my heart. --There have been instances of unhappy apostasy amongst us: but, blest be God, not many in proportion to the number brought under concern. At present there are a few under promising impressions; but, in general, a lamentable security prevails. Oh for a little reviving in our bondage! I might have given you a particular account of the conversion of some persons here, as indeed there are some uncommon instances of it, but I shall only observe in general that abstracting from particular circumstances, the work of conversion has been carried on in such steps as are described by experimental divines, as Alleine, Shepherd, Stoddard, Flavel, etc. And nothing confirms me more in the truth of their opinions concerning experimental piety, than this agreement and uniformity as to the substance, in the exercises of those that can make the fairest claim to saving grace.

There is one Isaac Oliver here, whose history, could I write it intelligibly to you, would be very entertaining. He has been deaf and dumb from his birth, and yet I have the utmost reason to believe he is truly gracious, and also acquainted with most of the doctrines, and many

of the historical facts of the Bible. I have seen him represent the crucifixion of Christ in such significant signs, that I could not but understand them. Those that live in the house with him can hold conversation with him very readily. There is so much of the devout ardour of his soul discovered at times, as is really affecting, and I have seen him converse in signs about the love and sufferings of Christ, till he has been transported into earnestness and dissolved in tears. The above Mr. Morris, with whom he lives, has told me, that eight years ago he appeared remarkably changed, and ever since is very conscientious in the whole of his behaviour; generally delights to attend both public and family-worship, though he cannot hear a word; and is observed sometimes to retire to secret prayer, though he signifies he is praying with his heart, when about his business, or in company, which is peculiarly practicable to him, as in all places he enjoys retirement. I could relate several pecularities about him; but as they are unintelligible to myself, or might seem incredible to those that are unacquainted with him, I omit them. So much, however, I know of him, that I cannot but look upon him as a miraculous monument of Almighty grace, that can perform its purposes on men, notwithstanding the greatest natural or moral impediments; and I submit it to the judgement of others, whether a person incapable of external instructions, could be brought to know the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven any other way than by immediate revelation. Besides the people here, several of my brethren who have been here, particularly Messrs. Samuel Blair, and John Roan, can attest this relation.

I forgot to inform you, in its proper place, that the Rev. Mr. Davenport was sent by the synod to Hanover last summer, and continued here about two months. And, blest be God, did not labour in vain. Some were brought under concern, and many of the Lord's people much revived, who can never forget

the instrument of it.

Thus, dear Sir, I have given you a brief account of what I am persuaded you will readily own to be the work of the Lord. We claim no infallibility, but we must not fall into scepticism. If we could form no judgment of such a work, why should we pretend to promote the conversion of men, if we cannot have any satisfying knowledge of it, when it appears? Indeed the evidence of its divinity here is so irresistible, that it has extorted an acknowledgment from some, from whom it could hardly be expected. Were you, Sir, a narrow bigot, you would, no doubt, rejoice to hear that there are now some hundreds of dissenters in a place where, a few years ago, there were not ten; but I assure myself of your congratulations on a nobler account, because a considerable number of perishing sinners are gained to the blessed Redeemer, with whom, though you never see them here, you may spend a blissful eternity. After all, poor Virginia demands your compassion, for religion at present is but like the cloud which Elijah's servant saw, Oh that it may spread and cover the land!

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[This letter continues for another two columns, but the remainder is devoted to a relation of the revival in other parts of Virginia and her neighbouring Colonies. Although interesting from the standpoint of the Great Awakening, they add nothing to our knowledge of the Hanover congregation.]

APPENDIX III.

[In The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A. M.... (New York, n.d.), as edited by Nehemiah Curnock, are recorded three letters from Samuel Davies. I shall not include the first, but shall give the second and third letters. The first was dated 2 March 1756 and if found on page 149, volume four of that edition, the other on page 194 of that volume was dated 28 January 1757.]

When the books arrived I gave public notice after sermon, and desired such negroes as could read, and such white people as would make good use of them and were not able to buy, to come to my house. For some time after the poor slaves, whenever they could get an hour's leisure, hurried away to me, and received them with all the genuine indications of passionate gratitude. All the books were very acceptable, but none more so than the Psalms and Hymns, which enabled them to gratify their peculiar taste for psalmody. Sundry of them lodged all night in my kitches, and sometimes, when I have awakened at two or three in the morning, a torrent of sacred psalmody has poured into my chamber. In this exercise some of them spend the whole night.

The good effects of this charity are already apparent. It convinces the heathen that, however careless about religion the generality of the white people are, yet there are some who think it a matter of importance. It has excited some of their masters to emulatation, and they are ashamed that strangers on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean should be at such pains to teach their domestics, while themselves are negligent about it. Such of the negroes as can read already are evidently improving in knowledge. It has excited others to learn to read, for as I give books to none but such as can read, they consider them as a reward for their industry. And I am told that, in almost every house in my congregation, and in many other places, they spend every leisure hour in endeavouring

to learn. Many do this from a sincere desire to know the will of God, and if some should do it from the meaner principle of vanity or curiosity, yet I cannot but rejoice that it renders them the more capable of receiving instruction. To all this I may add that the very distributing these books gives me an opportunity of speaking seriously, and with particular application, to many who would not otherwise come in my way.

There are thousands of negroes in this colony who still continue in the grossest ignorance, and are as rank pagans now as they were in the wilds of Affica. Not a few of these are within the bounds of my congregation. But all are not of this character. Upon some my ministry of late has been successful. Two Sundays ago I had the pleasure of seeing forty of their black faces at the Lord's Table, several of whom give unusual evidence of their sincerity in religion. Last Sunday I baptized seven or eight, who had been catechised for some time. Indeed, many of them appear determined to press into the kingdom, and, I am persuaded, will find an abundant entrance when many of the children of the kingdom are shut out.

I have distributed some of the books among the poor white people, with a charge to circulate them among such of their neighbours as would seriously read them, that they might be as extensively serviceable as possible, and some of them have since discovered to me what solemn impressions they received in reading them.

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[The second letter, dated 28 January 1757, from Hanover.]

Though you and I may differ in some little things, I have lâng loved you and your brother, and wished and prayed for your success, as zealous revivers of experimental Christianity. If I differ from you in temper and design, or in the essentials of religion, I am sure the error must lie

on my side. Blessed be God for hearts to love one another!

. . . . . .

I am endeavouring, in my poor manner, to promote the same cause in this part of our guilty globe. My success is not equal to my wishes, but it vastly surpasses both my deserts and my expectation. I have baptized near one hundred and fifty adult negroes, of whom about sixty are communicants. Unpolished as they are, I find some of them have the art to dissemble. But, blessed by God, the generality of them, as far as I can learn, are real Christians, and I have no doubt but sundry of them are genuine children of Abraham. Among them in the first place, and then among the poor white people, I have distributed the books you sent me. I desire you to communicate this to your brother, as equally intended for him, And let me and my congregation, particularly my poor negro converts, be favoured with your prayers. In return for which I hope neither you nor your cause will be forgotten by,

Reverend sir,

Your affectionate fellow labourer

And obliged servant,

SAMUEL DAVIES.

[Finally, I should like to give part of the letter from Davies which was printed in Benjamin Fawcett's A Compassionate Address to the Christian Negroes in Virginia, and Other British Colonies in North-America. With an Appendix, Containing some Account of the Rise and Progress of Christianity Among that Poor People (London, 1756), as quoted in the Evangelical and Literary Magazine, II, 535-7.

Though there are very few of the white people in this colony in abject poverty, yet there are many in such low circumstances, that they cannot spare money to purchase good books, and many more so stupidly

ignorant and insensible of their want of instruction, as to esteem it an unnecessary charge, and so excuse themselves from it as a needless expense. On one or other of these accounts, there are few houses in Virginia well furnished in this important respect. Multitudes are without any assistance of this kind, and even Bibles are not always to be found among them. To some of these I have distributed The Compassionate Address, Dr. Doddridge's Rise and Progress, Mr. Baxter's Call, etc., with the best advice I could give them, and hope I shall be able to send you an agreeable account of the happy effects of the distribution. But the poor neglected negroes, who are so far from having money to purchase books, that they themselves are the property of others; who were originally African savages, and never heard of Jesus or his gospel, till they arrived at the land of their slavery in America; whom their masters generally neglect, and whose souls none care for, as though immortality were not a privilege common to them with their masters:—these poor unhappy Africans are objects of my compassion, and I think the most proper objects of the society's charity. The inhabitants of Virginia are computed to be about 300,000 men, the one-half of which number are supposed to be negroes. The number of those who attend my ministry at particular times is uncertain, but generally about 300 who give a stated attendance; and never have I been so struck with the appearance of an assembly, as when I glanced my eye to that part of the meeting-house where they usually sit, <u>adorned</u>, for so it has appeared to me, with so many black countenances eagerly attentive to every word they hear, and frequently bathed in tears. A considerable number of them (about one hundred) have been baptized, after a proper time for instruction, and having given credible evidences, not only of their acquaintance with the important doctrines of the Christian religion, but also a deep sense of

piety and holiness. As they are not sufficiently polished to dissemble with a good grace, they express the sentiments of their souls so much in the language of simple nature, and with such genuine indications of sincerity, that it is impossible to suspect their professions, especially when attended with a truly Christian life and exemplary conduct. My worthy friend, Mr. Tod, minister of the next congregation, has near the same number under his instruction, who, he tells me, discover the same serious turn of mind. In short, Sir, there are multitudes of them in different places, who are willing and eagerly desirous to be instructed, and embrace every opportunity of acquainting themselves with the doctrines of the gospel, and though they have generally very little help to learn to read, yet, to my agreeable surprise, many of them, by the dint of application, in their leisure hours, have made such a progress, that they can intelligibly read a plain author, and especially their Bibles, and pity it is that any of them should be without them. Some of them have the misfortune to have irreligious masters, and hardly any of them so happy as to be furnished with these assistances for their improvement. Before I had the pleasure of being admitted a member of your society (1) they were wont to frequently come to me with such moving accounts of their necessities in this respect, that I could not help supplying them with books to the utmost of my small abilities; and when I distributed those amongst them, which my friends, with you, sent over, I had reason to think that I never did an action in all my life which met with so much gratitude from the receivers. I have already distributed all the books that I brought over which were proper for them; (2) yet still, on Saturday evenings, the

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(1) "Mr. Davies here means the Society for Promoting Religious Knowledge among the poor, which was first begun in August 1750." (536)

(2) Davies is referring to his return from the trip he made to Great Britain with Gilbert Tennent in 1753-4 to raise money for Princeton.

only time they can spare, my house is crowded with numbers of them, whose countenances still carry the air of importunate petitioners for the same favours with those who came before them. But, alas, my stock is exhausted, and I must send them away grieved and disappointed. Permit me, Sir, to be an advocate with you, and by your means with your generous friends, in their behalf. The books I principally want for them are, Watt's Psalms and Hymns, and Bibles. The two first they cannot be supplied with any other way than by a collection, as they are not among the books which your society give away. I am the rather importunate for a good number of these, as I cannot but observe that the negroes, above all the human species that I ever knew, have an ear for music, and a kind of extatic delight in psalmody; and there are no books they learn so soon, or take so much pleasure in, as those used in that heavenly part of Divine worship. Some gentlemen in London were pleased to make me a private present of these books for their use, and from the reception they met with, and their eagerness for more, I can easily foresee how acceptable and useful a larger number would be among them. Indeed, nothing would be a greater inducement to their industry to learn to read, than the hope of such a present, which they would consider both as a help and a reward for their diligence. I hardly know of any modern institution which bears so favourable an aspect on the declining interests of religion, as your society. They deserve the pleasure of hearing the happy effects of their generosity at the distance of 4000 miles, in these ends of the earth; and it is no small happiness to me, that the strictest veracity allows me to transmit so agreeable an account. Thus may the inhabitants of Great Britain receive blessings in answer to prayers put up for them in America, where I am sure they have many affectionate intercessors--

amongst whom be pleased to number your sincere and much obliged friend,

S. Davies.

APPENDIX III.

[Reverend Patrick Henry, St. Paul's Parish, Hanover County, to Commissary William Dawson, 13 February 1744/5. Dawson MSS.]

Reverend Sir,

I would have wrote you before now concerning..1(1)preachers that have lately seduced some unwary people in this parish, had I not expected to be more distinctly informed of some of their principles and practices which I thought might render my account of them and their followers more full and satisfactory. Which please take as follows,

There is in Pennsylvania a Synod of Protestant Dissenters consisting of about 40 members, one of whom viz. Mr John Thom[son] came to a certain gentleman's house in our parish on Thursday the first of this month, intending to preach the Sunday following in the meeting-house lately erected here; but when he, with a few that accompany'd him, came to the house on Sunday moroning, the followers of Robinson, Blair and Roan (whom I mentioned to you when at Wmsburg) shut the doors against him, alledging he was an opposer of those three, the last of whom had wrote to some of them, requesting them in the name of the Lord, and for the sake of Christ Jesus, not to allow Mr. Thomson to preach in their house because he is an enemy to Christ and true religion. On hearing of this difference among them, I sent and invited Thomson to my house; he entertained me with a distinct account of these new light men, their peculiar tenets, and practices with their rise and progress to this time, He is, in my opinion, a man of learning and good sense, a strenuous opposer of these new preachers and Whitefield, having

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(1) The omissions in this letter are not deletions of the text, but indicated my inability to decipher the text, or where the text is mutilated or missing.

published two small treatises against them (which I think are very well performed) and I believe he is a man of piety and veracity, so that his information may be looked upon as true. The substance of which, with what I have upon other...is as follows:

There is one Gilbert Tennent lately a leading man in the Synod of Presbyterians in Pennsylvania, who, with one Mr. Freelenhausen a Dutch minister of Staten Island, had, several years before Mr. Whitfield [sic] appeared in America, preached some strange notions about religious matters, which some other younger preachers imbibed from them, coming over joined them, and then their notions and opinions were everywhere published, and being espoused by Whitefield and his followers, became the current doctrines of that joint party; and at a meeting of the abovementioned Synod of Philadelphia in May 1741 this Tennent and eight more of the members openly declared their separation from the Synod, and have ever since that time continued to meet by themselves, to exercise a discipline of their own framing, and have ordained a good many young preachers, whom they sent into all parts of America, to disturb the established churches of all denominations, requiring almost no other qualification in candidates for orders, than, what they call, experiences of a work of grace in their hearts: and the preachers who lately came into Hanover were three of those ordained by the Separatists abovementioned. The new doctrines these Schismaticks are at great pains to propagate and which their missionaries publickly taught among us here [were] chiefly these following, viz

I. That antecedent to the very first beginning of a work of grace, there is a necessity, of, what they call, a ... convictions, whereby the sinner must be brought to despair, by way of preparation for gospel grace, and some of them assert that men must be willing to be damned before they can obtain an interest in saving grace or mercy. And Roan, who preached in Hanover about Christmas last, asserted in one of his public discourses

(as I was informed by one who heard him) that a sinner, before he can be thoroughly converted, must experience this Law: work [?] in such a degree as to disbelieve the very being of a God.

II. That every true convert is able to give an historical narrative of the time and manner of his or her conversion.

III. That every converted person is as assuredly sensible of the Spirit of God working in him as he would be of a wound or stab, or any thing else that he knew by his outward senses.

IV. That all true believers, and especially converted ministers, have the Spirit of discerning, whereby they can distinguish an hypocrite or a formal professor from a sincere Christian. And this Spirit is claimed by some here in Hanover, particularly by Samuel Morris and Thomas Green two of my neighbours.

V. That a true Christian may know whether a Minister be converted or not by hearing him preach or pray. This wild notion prevails among our Enthusiasts here, and I have been condemned by some of them as a stranger to true religion, and what they call the work of God, particularly by one Roger Shackleford who having come to church last Sunday, in his way home told those about him, that I had preached damnable doctrine, and that he pitied me as being an unconverted graceless man. And now that I have mentioned Shackleford, I cannot omit informing you of another piece of his conduct. I sent him one of the Bp of London's letters for his perusal, and before he had read it half over he returned it to the person by whome I sent it, and told her that he was sure the Bishop was an unconverted man, and wished God would open his eyes to see the truth!

VI. That a minister being unconverted hath no call or authority from God to preach the Gospel: and such a minister's preaching, tho' he preach sound doctrine, can be of no saving use to the hearers, and thus by their pretended spirit of discerning they apply the sentence of condemnation to all ministers who are not of their way, and persuade as many as they can to forsake their own pastors as carnal graceless wretches, tho' men of good principles and blameless lives.

VII. That a regular ordination of a man to the holy ministry, after due tryal and examination, is not the call of God, but men only; the call of God with them being wholly inward by the Spirit: and that therefore, none ought to be admitted into the ministry, but such as are sure of their conversion.

VIII. That Christians are not obliged to adhere to their own respective pastors, but ought to go to hear the word preached where they think they receive the greatest benefit, or where they meet with the greatest gifts in the preachers.

IX. They make little or no account of a sound profession of doctrine joined with a regular Christian conversation as a ground of judging charibably concerning a man's gracious state, unless one can give a narrative of the work of the Spirit of God in his heart; to judge charitably of a man's state on any other account is called by them a murdering, barbarous charity.

X. They claim a right to examine whom they please concerning their spiritual state, and take upon them to pronounce such as don't please them in their answers, to be in a carnal damned condition. (These are their own words) This right to examine is common to both preachers and people.

XI. Both preachers and people are great boasters of their assurance of salvation. They are so full of it here that the greatest number of those who have left the church, and followed those Enthusiastick preachers, do

confidently assert that they are as sure of going to heaven [mutilated through here] at last as if they were there already: nay some people here who have always been justly (reported) guilty of several immoralities such as cheating, lying, and even theft, and whose practices (I well know) are the same now as before, these very men do boast as much of their assurance, as others who are reckoned blameless in their conversation: when such as these are so confident or rather impudent, you'l [sic] be surprised at what follows, viz That their preachers publickly tell their hearers, that they shall stand at the right hand of Christ in the day of Judgement, and condemn all of them who do not come to him at their call.

Having given you an abstract of their doctrines, I beg leave to add a few sentences relating to their practice especially of the three Enthusiasts who preached lately in this parish.

These have been at great pains to vilifie the clergy of this colony and have told their followers, both in public and in private, that they can never reap any benefit by going to hear them, because they are not the servants of God, and have no authority to meddle with Holy things; they endeavor to give them a mean opinion of our liturgy, but this I believe they have done chiefly in private, for I did not hear that they spoke against it in their sermons, however I know that their adherants generally despise it, and one of them (Thomas Green) told one of his neighbors that it contained abundance of lies, and mentioned that sentence in the Te Deum (All the earth doth worhip thee) as one. These three that were with us, as well as their brethren elsewhere, strive with all their might, to raise in their hearers what they call convictions, which is thus performed. They thunder out in awful words, and new com'd [combined?] phrases, what they call the terrors [?] of the law [?]...ing and scolding, calling the old people grey headed devils, and all promiscuously, damned double damned,

whose [souls?] are in hell though they are alive on earth, lumps of hell fire, incarnate devils, 1000 times worse than devils, etc, and all the while the preacher exaults his voice puts himself into a violent agitation, stamping and beating his desk unmercifully, until the weaker sort of his hearers being scared, cry out, and fall down and work like people in convulsion fits, to the amazement of spectators, and if a few only are thus brought down, the preacher gets into violent passion again, calling out Will no more of you come to Christ? thundering out as before till he has brought a quantim sufficit of his congregation to this condition, and these things are extoled by the preachers as the mighty power of God's grace in their hearts, and they who thus cry out and fall down are caressed and commended as though pentitent souls who come to Christ, whilst they who don't are often condemned by the lump as hardened wretches almost beyond the reach of mercy, in so much that some who are not so seasoned [?], impute it to the hardness of their own heart, and wish and pray to be in like condition.

You may probably think, Sir, that I am a little hyperbolical in this last relation, but I beg leave to assure you, that I have unquestionable authority for the truth of it, and that they acted in this parish in the same manner as I have now described. I am told that there are two or three of these Enthusiastic preachers expected in Hanover next month, to administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; I wish they could be prevented, or, at least, ...[obliged] to show their credentials, for they may be Jesuits for [anything] we know.

You have here inclosed some notes of a sermon preached by the last of these missionaries; I was to have transcribed it but have not been at leisure

to do it. I purpose to wait on you at Wmsburg--as soon as my parochial and other business will allow, that I may have some further directions about my conduct with respect to these wild and wicked men, and am very respectfully

Reverend Sir

Your most obedient humble

Servant

Pat. Henry.

Please sir excuse some interlining, etc. I being necessarily in haste.

* * * * *

APPENDIX IV.

[William Stevens Perry, Historical Collections Relating to the American Colonial Church (Hartford, 1870), I, 381-3].

To the Worshipful The Speaker &
Gentlemen of the House of Burgesses.
The humble Petition of some of
the Clergy of this Dominion.

SHEWETH:

That there have been frequently held in the Counties of Hanover, Henrico, Goochland, & some others, for several years past, numerous Assemblies, especially of the common People, upon a pretended religious Account; convened sometimes by merely Lay Enthusiasts, who, in those meetings, read sundry fanatical Books & used long extempore prayers and Discourses; sometimes by strolling pretended Ministers; and at present by one Mr. Samuel Davies, who has fixed himself in Hanover; and in the Counties of Amelia and Albemarle, by a person who calls himself Mr. Cennick well known in England, by his strict Intimacy with the Revd Mr. Whitefield.

That tho' these Teachers, and their Adherents (except the above mentioned Cennick), assume the Denomination of Presbyterians, yet, we think, they have

no just claim to that character; as the Ringleaders of the Party were, for their erroneous Doctrines, and Practices, excluded the Presbyterian Synod of Philadelphia, in May, 1741 (as appears by an Address of said Synod to our Governour), nor have they since that time, made any Recantation of their Errors, nor been readmitted as Members of the Synod which Synod, tho' of many years standing, never was reprehended for Errors in Doctrine, Discipline or Governement, either by the established Kirk of Scotland, the Presbyterian Dissenters in England, or any other body of Presbyterians whatsoever; whence we beg leave to conclude, that the distinguishing Tenets of these Teachers before mentioned, are of a dangerous consequence to Religion in general; and that the Authors and propagators thereof, are deservedly stigmatized with a name unknown, till of late in this part of the World.

That your Petitioners further humbly conceive, that tho' these excluded Members of the Synod of Philadelphia were really Presbyterians, or of any of the other sects tolerated in England, yet there is no Law of this Colony by virtue whereof they can be entitled to a License to preach, far less to send forth their Emissaries, or to travel themselves over several Counties (to many places without invitation), to gain Proselytes to their way; "to inveigle ignorant and unwary People with their Sophistry," and under pretence of greater Degrees of Piety among them, than can be found among the Members of the Established Church, to seduce them from their lawful Teachers, and the Religion hitherto professed in this Dominion.

Your petitioners therefore, confiding in the Wisdom & Piety of this Worshipful house, the Guardians of their religious as well as Civil Privileges, and deeply sensible of the inestimable Value of the sould committed to their Charge, of the infectious and pernicious tendency, Nature, and Consequences

of Heresy and Schism; and of the sacred and solemn obligations they are under, "To be ready, with all faithful diligence, to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange Doctrines, contrary to God's Word; and to use their utmost care, that the flock of Christ may be fed with the sincere Milk of the word only;" humbly pray that the good laws, formerly in that Case made and provided, may be strictly put in execution; particularly that entituled "Ministers to be inducted." And as we humbly think, this law still retains its primitive Force and Vigour, so we pray that it may, on the present occasion, effectually exert the same; to the end, that all Novel notions, and perplexing uncertain Doctrines, and Speculations, which tend to the subversion of true Religion, designed by its adorable author, to direct the Faith and Practice of reasonable Creatures, may be suitably check'd and discouraged: and that this Church, of which we are members, and which our Fore fathers justly esteemed a most invaluable Blessing, worthy, by all prudent and honorable means, to be defended and supported, being by us, in the same manner, regarded, may remain "the Pillar and Ground of Truth," and Glory of this Colony, which hitherto hath been remarkably happy for uniformity of Religion.

And your Petitioners as in duty bound shall ever pray, &c.

D. MOSSOM,
PAT. HENRY,
JOHN BRUNSKILL.
JOHN ROBERTSON,
ROBT BARRETT.

APPENDIX V.

[The following charge of Governor Gooch was printed in the Virginia Gazette, from which it was copied by John Daly Burke in his The History of Virginia (Petersburg, 1804-16), III, 119ff, and from him by Foote in Sketches of Virginia, I, 135-7).

"Williamsburg, April 25th[1745]. Thursday last being the fourth day of General Court, his Honour the Governor was pleased to deliver the following charge to the gentlemen of the grand jury; which they afterwards requested his Honour to permit to be published--

"Gentlemen of the Grand Jury, Without taking notice of the ordinary matters and things, you are called to attend, and sworn to make inquisition for, I must on this occasion turn to your thoughts and recommend to your present service another subject of importance, which I thank God has been unusual, but, I hope, will be most effectual, I mean the information I have received of certain false teachers that are lately crept into this government; who, without order or license, or producing any testimonial of their education or sect, professing themselves ministers under the pretended influence of new light, extraordinary impulse, and such like natirical (Satanical, qu.?) and enthusiastical knowledge, lead the innocent and ignorant people into all kinds of delusion; and in this frantic and prophane disguise, though such is their heterodoxy that they treat all other modes of worship with the utmost scorn and contempt, yet as if they had bound themselves on oath to do many things against the religion of the blessed Jesus, that pillar and stay of the truth and reformed church, to the great dishonor of Almighty God, and the discomfort of serious Christians, they endeavour to make their followers believe that salvation is not to be obtained (except, qu.?) in their communion.

"As this denunciation, if I am rightly advised, in words not decent to repeat, has been by one of them publicly affirmed, and shows what manner of

spirit they all of them are of in a country hitherto remarkable for uniformity in worship, and where the saving truths of the gospel are constantly inculcated, I did promise myself, either than their preaching would be in vain, or that an insolence so criminal would not long be connived at.

"And therefore, gentlemen, since the workers of a deceitful work, blaspheming our sacraments, and reviling our excellent liturgy, are said to draw disciples after them, and we know not whereunto this separation may grow, but may easily foretel into what a distracted condition, by long forbearance, this colony will be reduced, we are called upon by the rights of society, and what, I am persuaded will be with you as prevailing an inducement, by the principles of Christianity, to put an immediate stop to the devices and intrigues of these associated scismatics, who having, no doubt, assumed to themselves the apostacy of our weak brethren, we may be assured that there is not any thing so absurd but what they will assert and accommodate to their favourite theme, railing against our establishment; for which in any other country, the British deominions only excepted, they would be very severely handled.

"However, not meaning to inflame your resentment, as we may without breach fo charity pronounce, that 'tis not liberty of conscience, but freedom of speech, they so earnestly prosecute; and we are very sure that they have no manner of pretence to any shelter under the acts of toleration, because, admitting they have had regular ordination, they are by those acts obliged, nor can they be ignorant of it, not only to take the oaths, and with the test to subscribe, after a deliberate reading of them, some of the articles of our religion, before they presume to officiate. But that in this indulgent grant, though not expressed, a covenant is intended, whereby they engage to preserve the character of conscientious men,—to that I say,

allowing their ordination, yet as they have not, by submitting to these essential points, qualified themselves to gather a congregation, or if they had, in speaking all manner of evil against us, have forfeited the privilege due to such compliance; insomuch, that they are entirely without excuse, and their religious professions are very justly suspected to be the result of Jesuitical policy, which also is an iniquity to be punished by the judges.

"I must, as in duty bound to God and man, charge you in the most solemn manner, to make strict enquiry after those seducers, and if they, or any of them, are still in this government, by presentment or indictment to report them to the court, that we, who are in authority under the Defender of our faith, and the appointed guardians to our constitution and state, exercising our power in this respect for the protection of the people committed to our care, may show our zeal in the maintenance of the true religion; not as the manner of some is, by violent oppression, but in putting to silence by such method as our law directs, the calumnies and invectives of these bold accusers, and in dispelling as we are devoutly disposed, so dreadful and dangerous a combination.

"In short, gentlemen, we should deviate from the pious path we profess to tread in, and should be unjust to God, to our king, to our country, to ourselves and to our posterity, not to take cognizance of so great a wickedness, whereby the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is turned into lasciviousness."

[This charge to the jury by Gooch opening the trials of Roan, Morris, and others probably led the Synod of Philadelphia to send the letter to Virginia referred to on page 176. The source from which this was copied is unknown, and there is no known copy of the Virginia Gazette for 25 April 1745. The parenthetical expressions are probably those of John Daly Burke.]

VITA

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